UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

What is the Experience of Hope for Female Adolescents of Rural Newfoundland?

By

Stella Edwards

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** in **COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled What is the Experience of Hope for Female Adolescents of Rural Newfoundland submitted by Stella Anne Edwards in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counselling Psychology.

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This Doctoral dissertation is very proudly dedicated to:

My

Brother

Joe

Joe, you are a real example of

"Living Hope"

and hope shall let fall from

Heaven a shower of

Roses

Thank you for our special friendship.

My Love and Friendship Always,

Stella

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore and understand the experience of hope for female adolescents from a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective. The research began with the question, "What is the experience of hope for female adolescents of rural Newfoundland?" The research focused on the hope experience of healthy female adolescents.

This study was conducted using a series of photo-assisted, in-depth interviews with five co-researchers over a period of eight months. Each co-researcher engaged in a photography component. Trustworthiness was addressed at each stage of the research project through the use of verbatim transcriptions, personal photographs, journalling and fieldnotes.

Analysis of the data revealed three common themes which were presented through the poetic medium of the metaphor of an ocean. The three themes were: hope is an ocean filled with life, hope is my identity and hope is an anchor of purest love. The findings of this study speak to an important interaction between an adolescent hope and home, an adolescent hope and identity and an adolescent hope and loving relationships. Findings elaborate the paradoxical nature of feelings, thoughts and behaviours found within the framework of the female adolescent hoping experience. Predominantly the findings of this study speak to the 'heart of female adolescent hope.' Implications for counseling have been suggested.

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GENESIS OF THE STUDY

Exploring hope began, for me, long before the academic endeavor of a Doctoral Degree in Counselling Psychology. Questions regarding the who, what , when and where of hope arose and were, in turn partially answered in the life experiences of people throughout my life. I have learned much about this thing called "hope." I am motivated to learn more.

The power of hope fascinates me. I am intrigued by its mystery as a therapist, researcher and a person. Reflecting on the phenomenon of hope gave rise to the following questions. How does hope develop? How is it expressed and where? How is it facilitated, sustained and maintained? How is it that people continue to hope against remarkable odds? At what point does the power of hope become the pain of hopelessness? Such are the mysteries of hope. Any attempt to study it is not to dispel its mystery, but to understand it more clearly.

I believe in hope. To have hope and to 'hope for' appear fundamental to human existence. But what happens when hope is challenged by adversity? Does hope prevail? Does it change?

To begin to answer these questions, I chose to study a population in which life circumstances challenge the phenomenon of hope, where the present is difficult and a bright future appears threatened. This specific population is not struck by what we would commonly call personal tragedy, although one might call it a cultural tragedy. I chose to engage with female adolescents of rural Newfoundland ("outports") in conducting my research project.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The research question central to this study is, "What is the experience of hope for female adolescents of rural Newfoundland?" This qualitative research study has been conducted from a hermeneutic-phenomenological perspective. Hermeneutic inquiry "attempts to describe and study meaningful human phenomena in a careful detailed manner as free as possible from prior theoretical assumptions, based instead on practical understanding" (Packer, 1985, p. 1081-1082). Phenomenological inquiry listens to the language of the experience while leading the investigation towards a reawakening to the lived meaning of the experience in a deeper and fuller manner (van Manen, 1990). In this study, the hermeneutic phenomenological approach utilizes both descriptive thematic analysis of the lived experience of hope and the interpretive nature of hermeneutics as a means of recovering the nature of the lived experience of hope (van Manen, 1990).

In addition, this research study employs the technique of photo-assisted interviewing. Photography is used as a qualitative research tool in companionship with the narratives of the co-researchers. Photographs and their accompanying explanations deepen the richness of the data. The hermeneutic-phenomenological perspective, enhanced by literal snapshots into the personal lives of the co-researchers, allowed for both description and interpretation of the themes of hope. The co-researchers were eager volunteers!

This study of hope begins from the viewpoint of a future referenced hope (Staats, 1989; Stotland, 1969). How does hope exist and how does hope survive, if indeed an individual's future is threatened? The purpose of this research study is to investigate, seek insight and to better understand the experience of hope in this specific context. This process has been a fascinating one.

Need for The Study

This study is undertaken at a time of drastic change and upheaval for the island of Newfoundland; the island portion of the eastern Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador. This island has endured incredible hardship. Families that have known nothing other than the "fishery-way-of-life" have been forced to learn new ways of life, leave dreams behind, participate in unfamiliar educational upgrading programs and most importantly the staple economy of generations, the inshore fishery, is no longer. One might wonder if all hope is not lost? The economy continues to worsen, and Native Newfoundlanders continue to leave their homes to find work and to survive elsewhere. Leaving "Home" has become a means/question of survival.

It seems that a bright future for Newfoundland is in question. I began to wonder about the adolescents of Newfoundland senior high schools, those preparing for entry into the real world. What do they anticipate? What is the experience of hope for these adolescents?

The theoretical construct of adolescent hopefulness has been defined in the literature as "the degree to which an adolescent possesses a comforting life-sustaining belief that a personal and positive future exists (Hinds, 1984, p. 3). In fact, hopefulness in adolescents is a prerequisite for achieving satisfactory adulthood (Smith, 1983) and contributes positively to psychosocial functioning (Hinds, 1988b; Snyder, 1994). Clearly hope needs to hold a significant role in the lives of adolescents. How is hope experienced when the present is difficult and the future looks bleak? When a personal and positive future is questioned by provincial, community and family hardships, what then is the experience of hope for adolescents? When the greater community is at risk how is hope experienced?

It seems imperative that we enhance our understanding of adolescent hopefulness considering its apparent significance in the lives of our adolescent populations.

Significance of The Study

No other reported studies have attempted to gain insights into the hoping experiences of female adolescents of rural Newfoundland. In fact, no other reported studies have investigated the experience of hope for healthy adolescents - those who do not suffer from life-threatening illnesses or mental illnesses. Theoretically this study has the potential to contribute to the further development of hope models which emphasize the dynamic and unique experience of hope in more clinical contexts. Within the practice of counselling psychology, this study has the potential to enhance understanding of an individual's personal experience of hope which in turn may contribute to a more effective counsellor-client relationship.

Newfoundland – An island that is "Yours To Discover"

The Context of The Study

"It's this little, tiny island out in the middle of nowhere, over there on the east coast," was her response when I asked a good friend of mine, who had been there only once, this question: "As a fellow Canadian, how do you understand Newfoundland?" Such a response did not actually surprise me.

So little is understood about this island called Newfoundland that is adrift off the east coast of its' country. Newfoundland is understood to be part of that "poorer" province of Canada, embedded in Irish culture but not quite as glamorized as is its' old country of Ireland. As did the co-researchers of this research study, I too, will attempt to give you a glimpse into this Canadian island that they so proudly revere.

The island of Newfoundland (the smaller portion of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador), one of the four Atlantic provinces, is situated off the

east coast of North America between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Atlantic Ocean. Newfoundland was originally discovered in 1497 by John Cabot, an Italian-born explorer identified as having been sailing under the English flag., However, the aboriginal peoples lived in Newfoundland thousands of years before the arrival of the Europeans. The name Newfoundland itself, found in British records perhaps as early as 1502, was generally applied to all newly discovered lands in the North Atlantic (www.mun.ca/library/cns /links/html).

Newfoundland takes special pride in its traditions and customs. "In the past, the geographic isolation of Newfoundland and of the individual communities within the province greatly contributed to the growth of folk arts such as ballad singing, dancing, and storytelling" (www.mun.ca/library/cns/links/html, p. 12). "Mummering", an Irish-Newfoundland Christmas custom (with its roots found in Britain), which involves playing dress-up and visiting other people's home in disguise, often involves singing and dancing. This custom continues today.

The Church is a significant piece of Newfoundland culture. Roman Catholics form the largest single religious group in the province: others include the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada. Historically education in Newfoundland had been under Church administration but that is no longer the case today.

Also unique to island of Newfoundland is the Newfoundland Dog. The Newfoundland Dog stands between 25 and 29 inches tall, weighs from 100 to 150 pounds, has unique webbed feet, a water-resistant coat and 'rudder-like tail' making this gentle animal an excellent swimmer (www.mun.ca/library/cns/links/html). In fact, the Newfoundland Dog has become noticeably famous for rescuing drowning people. In 1919, one Newfoundland Dog was awarded a gold medal in its' heroic actions of pulling to safety a lifeboat of some twenty shipwrecked people. (www.mun.ca/library/cns/links/html). In

addition to the Newfoundland Dog, Newfoundland also boasts that of its unique horse - the Newfoundland Pony.

The beauty of this island presents itself in a most ironic manner. It's rugged coastline, jagged cliffs and roaring ocean waves are only a few of the features of this island that reflect its natural raw beauty. It is almost easy to forget the hardship endured to create a place of varied culture when one observes the beauty of its land and sea. Newfoundlanders have carved out an existence and culture through war, depression and uncertainty (www.mun.ca/ library/ cns/links/html). And in so many ways today the fight wages on. With much determination and courage the people of this island set adrift, continue to toil on the land and sea today.

Hardship and adversity grew out of the history of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, writing the story for many generations to come. The reputative struggle of a people to gain a representative government is a story which is 'unique in the annals of the British Empire.' (Perlin, Sept. 23, 1958). Governed from across the Atlantic Ocean under British rule, this province was intended to be solely a fishery preserve, with little or no acknowledgments of legal rights for its people - there was no law. Newfoundland and Labrador eventually established an independent Republican government. It was on March 31, 1949, that Newfoundland and Labrador became the tenth Canadian province and a brighter future was anticipated with freedom and new beginnings.

The Grand Banks, one of the world's richest fishing grounds, located to the east of Newfoundland was one resource which offered incredible promise for a positive economical future. Newfoundland's economy has historically been dominated by the inshore fishing industry, cod being the staple of the fishing economy. However, today, the cod fishery has dwindled and this faithful survival strategy of years gone by is no longer dependable. Thus, the story of hardship for

Newfoundland continues. Today its people, a community as a whole, are faced once again with an uncertainty. Today, questions around survival are rewritten. Without the fishery as a staple, despite abundant mineral resources such as oil, gas, zinc, and asbestos the people of this province are now asking "Where will I go? Where will I end up?" versus "What will I do?" Some people decide to leave. It seems that Newfoundlanders are witnessing a shift in culture.

This research study is specific to the island of Newfoundland versus the entire province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The historical highlights of Newfoundland presented in this section represent the history shared by each story-teller and photographer of this research study. Embedded in her Newfoundland culture, her voice longs to be heard, her experience volunteers expression.

Overview Of Chapters

In Chapter One, I have introduced the need and significance of this study. Furthermore, I have provided a backdrop to the cultural environment from which the co-researchers emerge. Chapter Two begins with a review of the literature on hope, hope and the discipline of psychology and hope and adolescents. In Chapter Three, the approach to inquiry called hermeneutic phenomenology is elaborated and research activities such as field entry, engaging co-researchers, and preparing myself as a researcher are described. Thematic analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations are also included in this chapter. In Chapter Four, the five co-researchers share their stories of the Images of Hope. Chapter Five is an integration of the Interpretation of the Findings with the Discussions of the Findings. This chapter is a dedication to the themes of the hope experience, which include 1) Hope is an ocean filled with life ; 2) Hope is my identity and 3) Hope is an anchor of purest love. Chapter Six is a discussion of potential future areas of research in this field, counselling implications, as well as the limitations of this study. Chapter Seven, the concluding chapter is entitled "On The Way." In it I describe the

research and reflect upon the impact it has had on me personally and professionally.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Qualitative research requires reviewing the literature as the need arises throughout the research process. This preliminary review gives focus to the study and places the research question within the context of the ongoing research on the topic (Bibby, Jevne et al., 1991). A secondary literature review, conducted following the completion of the research findings is incorporated into Chapter Five illustrating literary support for thematic analyses.

The research reviewed in the preliminary literature process includes the literature on hope, hope and psychology and hope and adolescents. An apparent void exists in psychology research regarding the hope of healthy adolescents. This study is one attempt to reduce the gap.

In this literature review, hope and the discipline of psychology acknowledging the importance of hope in the practice of psychology, while highlighting its' absence in the training component is addressed. It is my personal and professional experience that hope has a central place in practice and training, for it has been my experience that hope can be intentionally more central to both the profession of psychology and the preparation of the professional.

Hope

Indeed hope has been described in theoretical terms for many years (Lynch, 1965), but its' precise meaning is rather vague. It has been described as a complex intangible (Jevne, 1993) and its mystery continues to escape us. As a concept, hope has been described as a defense against fear (Korner, 1970), a state (Herth, 1989; Snyder, 1994), a process of searching and moving forward (Menninger, 1959), an expectation of goal achievement (Erickson et al., 1975), a sense of the possible (Lynch, 1965), an attribute of an individual (McGee, 1984, Nowatny, 1989) and a

"relative to courage and trust" (Jevne, 1991, p. 147). Lynch (1965), asserts that hope is the very heart and center of a human being, while a Canadian east coast female musician sings that hope is "the song in my soul, the music of my being and the breath of my existence" (Edwards, 2000). Others describe it as a dynamic life force (Dufault and Martocchio, 1985), a stimulus for action (McGee, 1984), a developmental concept (Fromm, 1968), and as a process (Stephenson, 1991).

Research endeavors into the mystery of the hope phenomenon have expanded an understanding of hope beyond the early descriptions which tended to describe it specifically in unidimensional terms (Stotland, 1969). Since then hope has emerged as a phenomenon with multidimensional properties (Dufault and Martocchio, 1985; Farran, Herth & Popovich, 1995, Jevne, 1993; Miller & Powers, 1988). Nonetheless, there are ongoing research difficulties in reaching a unified consensus on the nature of this elusive concept. The variations in its conceptualizations illustrate the on-going attempts to understand hope

Several main themes found in the literature characterize the hope phenomenon. The centrality of hope is an apparent theme, describing hope as an integral, fundamental part of life (Herth, 1990). Others include the relationship between hope and the future (Miller, 1983), and hope as a fluctuating entity (Vaillot, 1970).

Attempts to create objective, valid and reliable measures of hope include the development of such measurement scales as the Herth Hope Scale, (Herth,1989), the Miller Hope Scale (Miller,1988), and the Nowotny Hope Scale (Nowotny,1989). Quantitative and qualitative studies continue in the investigative journey towards gathering a deeper understanding of the hope phenomena.

"We can live three weeks without food, three days without water, and, yes, we can even live three minutes without air, but we cannot live without hope." (Wright, 1980,.p.7). Although hope is a concept commonly referred to and one that

perhaps has an impact upon every dimension of human existence (Large, 1990), there is much yet to be discovered about this human condition. The beauty of its mystery continues to beckon researchers to visit an investigative world dedicated to this phenomena. In fact, we continue to ask many of the same questions. What exactly is this thing called hope? In what forms do we know it? What defines its existence? Where does it rest, what keeps it alive and what diminishes it? Is it even possible to gain a sense of exactness around such an elusive concept?

Whether hope comes forth from the soul, is learned, is part of human nature or is defined cognitively, it is unquestionably essential to human life (Stephenson, 1991).

Hope and Psychology

The relationship between hope and psychology is not an uncharted one. In fact, this relationship has established itself as one of indisputable credibility. In psychological practice hope is significant and is associated with improvement in therapeutic treatment (Sutherland, 1993). Research indicates that a relationship exists between hope and psychological well-being suggesting that hope is crucial to therapeutic process and therefore essential to the discipline of psychology (Bruhn, 1984; Diez-Manrique, 1984; Dufrane & Leclair, 1984; Frank, 1968; Menninger, 1959; Orne, 1968; Pruyser, 1987).

Nursing and medical professionals claim that hope strengthens psychological and physiological defense systems (Thurlow, 1967), influences the immune system (Gottschalk, 1985), and thereby deters illness (Staats, 1986). While group therapists have found hope to be an important curative factor in group counselling (Yalom, 1975), psychiatrists and psychologists argue that hope has a positive influence on therapy and the general quality of life (Engel, 1968; Frank, 1975; Pierce, 1981).

Theoretical support for hope in the discipline of psychology

The construct of hope derives theoretical support primarily from three sources in the discipline of counselling psychology: existentialism, social learning theory and developmental theory (Farran, Herth and Popovich, 1995). "From a clinical perspective, existentialists have recognized hope as a curative factor in both group and individual therapy" (Frank, 1968; Yalom, 1975 cited in Farran et al., 1995, p. 21). To Yalom (1975, 1995), the instillation of hope is a primary therapeutic factor in the process of group psychotherapy. Frank (1968), as well, argues that hope is an important and genuinely therapeutic ingredient in forms of treatment, such as free association or habit training. While existence is essentially unexplainable to existentialists, they emphasize the "rational attributes of hope in its' focus on responsibility, freedom of choice and ramifications of actions" (Farran et al., 1995, p.21)

Theoretical support for the rational attribute of hope is provided by social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), which acknowledges "human self-regulatory capacity to plan, create, imagine and engage in foresightful action" (Farran et al., 1995, p. 21). Furthermore, as an interactive process hope involves a continuously interwoven dynamic between an individual's behavior, environment and personal factors (Farran et al., 1995). To Stotland (1969), hope is not confined to a 'total' theory of behavior, but rather is representative of various aspects of personal motivation.

The relational attribute of hope finds support in Erikson's epigenetic developmental model. This view asserts the impact of early trusting relationships and "cumulative life experiences" on hope development (Farran et al., 1995). "A mature hope state develops into a sense of self-certainty and life satisfaction, including a sense of identity consolidation which remains constant over time"

(Farran et al., 1995, p. 22). Erikson (1982), suggests that despair grows as hope diminishes for an individual lacking a sense of life order or connection to life itself and the world. From their work with hopelessness in depressed and sociopathic patients, Megles and Bowlby (1969) support Erikson's epigenetic model, observing that developmentally "both depressed patients and sociopaths have associated disruption of affectional bonds during childhood" (p. 77). Where early trust development is crucial to human personal growth, self-esteem and sense of self within the world, relational hope connects the souls of human beings, fostering a specific dimension of life that affects all others.

Support for the role of hope in psychotherapy is also found in psychoanalytic theory. Freud (1905, 1953), acknowledges the detailed and perplexed link between expectations, illness, and effective needs of treatment, seemingly recognizing the role of hope in all therapy. Freud (1953), also elaborates upon the importance of therapeutic expectations "colored by hope and faith" (p. 289). In an examination of the psychoanalytic process, French (1952), emphasizes the specific role of hope in psychotherapy as an "activating force of the ego's integrative function", and hence, "a crucial motivating component in motivating an individual to overcome inner psychological conflict and resolve a psychoneurosis." (French, 1952, p. 40).

Despite evidence that hope is a significant aspect of mental health and therapeutic practice (Sutherland, 1993), references to the specifics of the role of hope in mainstream psychology are few. Furthermore, the means for implementing hope into the practice of psychology are not addressed in the literature. What does this mean for the field of counselling psychology? Would more focus on the issue of hope in the field of counselling psychology influence how it is practiced?

The relationship between hope and psychology from this literature review has been established and raises questions regarding the use of hope in counselling.

These concerns will be further addressed in Chapter Six - Counselling Implications and Implication for the Future Research.

Hope and Adolescents

There are limited studies exploring hope in adolescents. Although the current research suggests that hope is significant to adolescents, neither qualitative nor quantitative research efforts have been firmly dedicated to this relationship. Hinds (1984), using qualitative grounded theory to examine the hope experiences of adolescents hospitalized for substance abuse as well as healthy adolescents, has published the most in this area. Developing a construct of adolescent hopefulness, Hinds (1984), has defined it as "the degree to which an adolescent possesses a comforting life-sustaining belief that a personal and positive future exists"(p.3). Four hierarchical levels constitute this construct ranging from lower levels of specifically forced effort, to the higher levels of personal possibilities, a personal expectation of a better tomorrow and the adolescent's anticipation of a personal future. (Hinds, 1984).

The Hopefulness Scale for Adolescents (HSA), developed by Hinds (1984), is a visual analogue scale, consisting of 24 items, aimed at quantifying the amount of self-reported hopefulness an adolescent possesses at the specific time of measurement (Parkins, 1997). Because the HSA was specifically developed from interviews with adolescents being treated for substance abuse, the scale cannot necessarily be applied to the general population.

Snyder (1993), has explored hope in adolescents and children through the development of a quantitative measurement tool of hopefulness. With an apparent stronger psychometric validity, Snyder's Hope Scale focuses on the perception that a goal can be met (Stotland, 1969). Snyder defines hope as "a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful (a) agency, which describes goal-directed determination and (b) pathways which describe the planning of ways

to meet goals" (Snyder, 1995, p. 355). Although Snyder's observations about hope and adolescents are important, they are not methods logically compatible with this research study.

Snyder's Hope Scale was used to investigate the levels of hope of disadvantaged Tanzanian children and adolescents impoverished and threatened by a personal unavailability of education (Parkins, 1997). In the same study, Parkins (1997), used photography to access the experience of hope within this population of nine boys and eleven girls between the ages of 14 and 17. For Parkins (1997), investigating hope through photo-assisted interviewing proved to be highly useful as a qualitative tool in discovering the particular relevance of hope in the lives of the fifteen teenagers that participated in the study.

To many, hope is essential to the well-being and coping strategies of individuals in difficult situations (Frankl, ; Hall, 1990; Herth, 1990; Dufault and Martocchio, 1985). Although the literature does not refer specifically to the adolescent population, it does nonetheless shed light upon the relationship between hope and its helpful role for people experiencing life difficulties.

Most hope research has been conducted with individuals who are either terminally ill (Hall, 1990; Herth, 1990), chronically ill, or recovering from illness, such as cancer patients (Dufault and Mortocchio, 1985; Ersek, 1992, Hinds & Martin, 1988; Owen, 1989), and substance abusers (Hinds, 1984, 1988). Little is known about the experience of hope for healthy adolescents. The void in the literature beckons to research in this area. As an investigator I am thrilled to take hope research in that direction.

CHAPTER THREE

APPROACH TO THE INQUIRY

> I want to engage in this research activity with all of my being and delight in the passion which cartwheels in my heart and in my stomach. I want to understand your experiences of hope as fully as possible. I want to travel with you, wherever you lead, follow, listen and learn. I want to be in your moment - side by side sharing eyes and ears. I have a longing to fly away from me and fully towards you. I want to exalt in the freedom of our genuine encounter (Journal Entry, June 5, 2000).

The aim of this research activity is to search for a deeper understanding of the experience of hope for female adolescents of rural Newfoundland. Such an important search did not leap into motion. It grew as did my understanding of what it would take to investigate this phenomenon in its most authentic way.

Every researcher must confront the issue of what method to use for a given investigation. I was deliberate in my thoughtfulness and determined to employ a methodology which would fit my research question as would "a suit of clothes fit a person" (Gladding, 1992, p. 39). I thought that this research investigation would find its most authentic expression through the perspective of hermeneutic phenomenology grounded in a qualitative approach. A photography component seemed equally appropriate.

The Qualitative Paradigm

The naturalistic inquiry of the qualitative research approach involves a process of personal contact and insight, sensitivity to context, inductive analysis, design flexibility, and empathic neutrality, all held in a holistic perspective. (Patton, 1990, pp. 40 -41). The methods of qualitative inquiry allow the researcher to investigate selected issues in an in-depth manner, with the potential of producing a wealth of detailed information, while allowing the flexibility of a dynamic investigation and design. Understanding the phenomenon under investigation as a whole within a flexible design is critical to me as a researcher, assuming that "the

whole is understood as a complex system that is greater than the sum of its parts." (Patton, 1990, p. 49). I believe in seeking a comprehensive perspective.

In the holistic perspective of this research I have been able to explore and learn from context, feel the power of the nuance, immerse myself in the setting, recognize idiosyncrasies and delve into complexities. This qualitative approach fits well with the theoretical perspective for this study, while meeting the intentions of me as a researcher and my investigation.

Methodology

In this section, I describe the theoretical perspective of hermeneutic phenomenology and examine the philosophies of both phenomenology and hermeneutics. Photography as an effective qualitative research tool in relation to phenomenology and hermeneutics is subsequently addressed in this chapter. Photographs have been used to generate raw data throughout this research activity. As a final piece of this section, I explain my worldview and how this may influence my work as a researcher.

Description of Hermeneutic-Phenomenology

Hermeneutic phenomenology which served as the framework for my approach to this study is a "human science which studies persons" (van Manen, 1990, p. 6). This human science is intrigued by and interested in the world in its simple form, just "as we find it" (van Manen, 1990, p. 18). Here in this simple form, human experience is compelling, raw and immediate.

A hermeneutic-phenomenological study is one which both describes and interprets a phenomenon. Phenomenology is an activity of description and hermeneutics is one of interpretation. Phenomenology describes the experiences while hermeneutics travels to the depths, seeking to uncover the powerful, hidden silences in an explication of that experience. While hermeneutic-phenomenological research does not necessarily entail a specific set of methods, the guidelines of

hermeneutic-phenomenological research permit the experience of hope for female adolescents about to embark upon the journey of independence, to be described and then interpreted for a deeper meaning.

Phenomenology

In his quest to coin this philosophical perspective, Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, generated specific tenets of the nature of phenomenology. He was specifically concerned with the essence of experience, transcendental subjectivity and the intentionality of consciousness. As phenomenology further developed it evolved in various directions. One of Husserls' students, Martin Heidegger, intrigued by an existential phenomenology did not believe in the essence of human experience. Rather, he wanted to understand the meaning of being-in-the-world which gave birth to a phenomenology more grounded in a sense of existentialism. In turn, Gadamer, a student of Heidegger lead the phenomenological movement towards "researching the lived experiences of individuals from the perspective of attempting to understand the world through their eyes" (Keen, 2000, p. 49).

"The locus of phenomenological research is human experience." (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 44). Phenomenological research, in its descriptive, scientific nature, emphasizes descriptions of "what people experience and how it is that they experience what they experience." (Patton, 1990, p. 71). Without any intention to explain or quantify an experience, phenomenology seeks to bring to light a deeper understanding of the 'essence' of a human phenomenon.

Phenomenological research always "begins in the lifeworld, the world of the natural attitude of everyday life" (van Manen, 1990, p. 7). The goal of phenomenological research is to capture accurate and concise descriptions of a particular aspect of human lived experience and to " allow us to contact phenomena as we actually live them out and experience them" (Husserl, cited by Valle & Halling, 1978). Phenomenology intends to understand more deeply the nature of

our everyday experiences. It asks the question "What is this or that kind of experience like?" (van Manen, 1990, p. 9) and in its epistemological search asks 'how do we know'? It then proceeds to understand an answer to the question through the mindful and reflective practice of thoughtfulness.

Phenomenology seeks an understanding of the pre-reflective versus the reflective experience. Its aim is to elucidate an understanding of the lifeworld, bringing us closer to the lifeworld of experience. In the process of drawing us closer to the lived experience, phenomenology unravels the structures of experience, revealing the essential nature of a phenomenon. The essential nature of a phenomenon is that which constitutes the thing itself and without this essence - its essential structure, then it fails to be what it essentially is (van Manen, 1990; Husserl, 1982; Merleau-Ponty, 1962). In keeping with its original Husserlian understanding, then, phenomenology is the study of essence. It remains sensitive to the uniqueness of the person while blending the unique into the universal.

Hermeneutics

The word hermeneutic derives from the Greek god, Hermes who was granted the task of communicating messages from Zeus and other gods to the people (van Manen,1990; Keen, 2000). From its original seventeenth century application, hermeneutics was utilized to uncover the messages found in the Biblical scriptures for an enriched meaning and understanding of God's messages found in these texts. This Biblical context marked the genesis of the interpretative identity of hermeneutics.

As a methodology, hermeneutics was first considered by Friedrich Schleiermacher, as an important means for "interpreting a literary text in the sociocultural context in which the work was created" (Keen, 2000, p. 44). His notion of the "hermeneutic circle", was "representative of the circular dialectical movement of understanding" (Keen, 2000, p. 44). Later, Wilhelm Dilthey, applied

hermeneutics to further the understanding of human motivation and behaviour (Chessick, 1990). In his interpretation of the hermeneutic circle, Dilthey sought to establish an understanding that differed from his predecessor "based upon an empathetic identification with the subject under study rather than an attempt to remain separate and 'objective'" (Chessick, 1990, p. 260). This modern understanding, with a focus on a movement from the whole to the parts, and from the parts to the whole has remained imperative to the understanding of the hermeneutic process today.

Hermeneutics is a philosophy of interpretation committed to the recognition of universal perspectivism. Hermeneutics "seeks to elucidate and make explicit our practical understanding of human actions by providing an interpretation of them" (Packer, 1985, p. 1086). It is not an analysis of an object, but rather an engagement in "the task of understanding texts"(Valle & Halling, 1978, p. 15). In many ways it is as though the text has its own voice and is able to speak to the reader.

Hermeneutics interprets experience, revealing the meaning of the "texts of life" (van Manen, 1990, p. 4). In the research process of hermeneutics there is a filtering and assimilation, a back and forth activity, a relating of the parts to the whole through a spiral-like interpretative process. This process of vacillating from the parts to the whole is described as the "hermeneutical circle" (Valle & Halling, 1978, p.15). Within this hermeneutical circle "One returns to the point of origin again and again, but never at the same level." (Valle & Halling, 1978, p. 15).

> I have listened to your voices time and again. Doing so brings me back to all of you in the most intimate sort of way. I hear your giggles, sighs, sniffles and silences. I recall the fears attached to your language and the magnitude of your presence. Each time I go to this place - back to your words - I remember all that I had experienced in our conversations, yet each time I always find something new. I return to you and I discover you all over again. It is the most interesting experience. Today, as I prepare to return to your worlds, your words and your silences and to my many written thoughts, I say to you: Hello again. I am wondering...how, how will you read yourselves to me <u>today</u>? (Journal Entry, November 14, 2000).

Hermeneutics "seeks to understand what the spoken words have left unsaid" (Keen, 2000, p. 45). Hermeneutic inquiry mined for the deeper meaning of the stories of hope in this research study.

Photography

Photography can be a valuable source of information in qualitative research. A photograph magically travels us back in time on subconscious footsteps. Recollected thoughts and emotions powerfully return and remind us of the history, if not the story of this captured lived moment. Perhaps photos echo a story of history and it is there in the echo that the power of the photograph explodes. It seems that this echo uncovers the human space of thoughtfulness and soulfulness that has become nestled in the array of emotional packaging of memories. This personal time and space is often intentionally silenced in private human thought and feeling.

What is found in a photograph?

"I don't know why - it's sorta strange...ah...that a picture of these flowers can like...actually mean so much to me" (Gentle Thunder - A2, p. 31).

The word photography finds its' derivative roots in the phrase "to paint with light" - "to paint (graphy) and with light (photo)" (Jevne, 2000, p. 23). The artfulness of photography allows for various interpretations. The photography process, whether sophisticated or playful is individual and personal. It is the photographer, the 'painter of light' who captures images through his or her eyes, emotions and in the awe of the moment.

Photography and Research

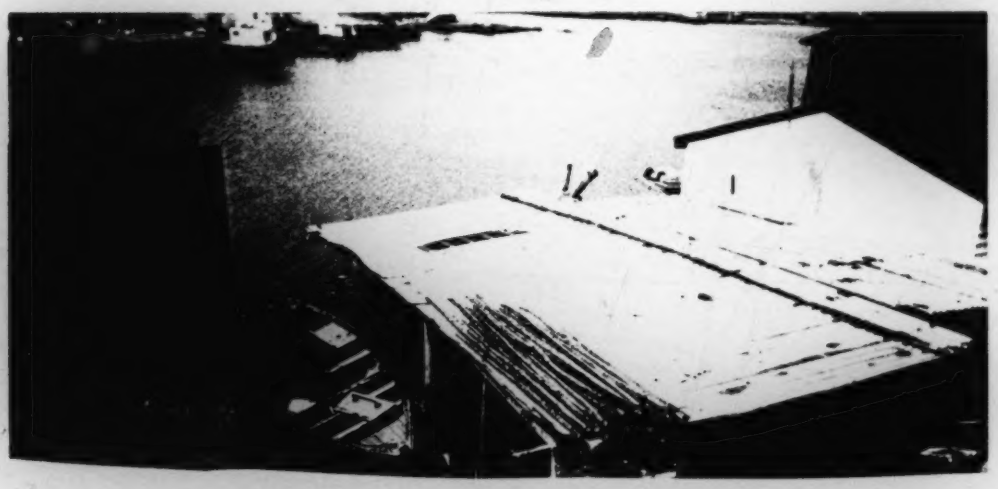
Photography as "part of the repertoire of skills available to the field-worker" (Patton, 1990, p. 247), is a methodology that fits with both phenomenology and hermeneutics. To Hagedorn (1994), "The use of photographs in an interview is a unique methodological approach for investigating various human experiences" (p. 47). Photographs allow for open expression, uninhibited by the boundaries of verbal expression, enhance the interpretation of experiences, maintain an explicit reference point and invite a more relaxed environment for the sharing of stories in a more spontaneous manner (Parkins, 1997).

Photography has been used successfully in research studies with delinquents (Fryrear & Nuell, 1977), cross-cultural studies (Okura, Ziller & Osawa, 1986), and adolescents struggling with behavioral difficulties (Milford, Fryrear, & Swank, 1983). Research literature highlights the successful use of photography in treating mental health problems arising from anxiety, low self-esteem, and abuse victims (Jevne, 2000). Photos have been specifically helpful for children and adolescents in therapy as a means for exploring and facilitating self-expression (Weiser, 1988).

When photographs are utilized for the purpose of qualitative interviewing, the process is referred to as photo-interviews (Collier & Collier, 1986; Hagedorn, 1994), or as photo-assisted interviewing, a method coined by Gastkins and Forte (1995). The combination of photography and narratives, in photo-assisted

interviews has been used in studies exploring how adolescents view hospitalizations (Savedra & Highly, 1988) and in studies exploring the meaning of hope with older adults (Gaskins & Forte, 1995). Hagedorn (1994), writes that "photographic interviews elicit a unique return of insights that might otherwise be impossible to obtain with other techniques" (p. 47). Photographs that capture a moment in time, imaging the human experience as it was lived, enhance interviews as they permit a later reflection of those moments and their meaning within a particular lived experience (Hagedorn, 1994).

Typically in phenomenological investigations, interviews are used to generate the data. Considering that phenomenology focuses on how people describe their experience through their senses, the use of images to stimulate those senses seems natural. Photo-assisted interviews and phenomenology have great potential to fit well together. Furthermore, the process of camera-work or camera-investigation engages people in a novel way that can be both meaningful and enjoyable.



With a racing eagerness and joyful eyes she rushes to say: "But...this...the hope... I sees in this picture - I LOVES THIS PICTURE!" I could cry over that now...it's SO BEAUTIFUL...this picture...(Eyes of Blue Fire - D1, p. 5).

Photography and Phenomenology

As a phenomenological tool, the camera begins with the lifeworld, where photographs serve as incredible reflections of that lifeworld; a variation of information through the snapshots of the photographer's reality (Ziller & Smith, 1977). Indeed Hagedorn (1994) argues, "For the photographer, to photograph is to visually capture the essence of the experience" (p. 44).

Typically, qualitative research utilizing photo-assisted interviewing has engaged the researcher as photographer rather than the participant or, as in this study the co-researcher as photographer (Collier & Collier, 1986). Co-reseachers as photographers in photo-assisted research has been introduced by Ziller (1990). Ziller's approach was to invite the co-researchers, with the use of cameras provided by the researcher, to capture their personal images associated with certain feelings. This approach was the one I ultimately used to explore the hope experiences of adolescent Newfoundland girls.

Because photographs are considered to be images of the photographer's information processing perspective and represent part of the photographer's interaction with the environment (Ziller and Smith, 1977), they are appropriate for doing phenomenological research. As a tool, a photograph has the potential to take the research activity into the conceptual world of the co-researcher. As such, the process of photography often uncovers misconceptions and reaches a more reality-oriented understanding of a phenomenon. (Highley & Ferentz, 1989). Through a photograph a researcher becomes able to "see as they see" and "feel as they feel" (Ziller, 1990, p. 21).

Hermeneutic Photography

> The images captured with photography invite human beings to speak about these experiences with a reflective depth. Photographs not only gather interpretations of images of experience, but also enrich and extend the communication of the experiences (Hagedorn, 1994, p. 46).

Hermeneutic photography is an esthetic technique grounded in hermeneutic and esthetic philosophy (Hagedorn, 1994). As a research method hermeneutic photography seeks knowledge of human experience through a process of "seeing and hearing." (Hagedorn, 1994, p. 47). "Hermeneutic photography highlights the importance of seeing and interpreting as a means for understanding experiences by grasping symbols that reflect it" (Parkins, 1997, p. 79). In this sense photographs lead to an understanding of experience through the reflective and interpretative components of hermeneutics.

Hagedorn (1994), encourages us to consider that photographs are not unlike audiotaped recordings of descriptions of experiences, where one captures the visual data, the other captures the verbal data. Essentially, photographs are "visual diaries." (Hagedorn, 1994, p.49). With such visual diaries much can be learned about the experience of the photographer. In fact, it seems that in every photograph there is a story and in each story of a photograph there are symbols, visual symbols of lived experience. Symbols motivate visual descriptions of an experience which help illuminate the interpretation of that experience.

Weiser (1993), reminds us that the cameras don't take the pictures, the people behind them do. They take pictures of their world, which in turn provide clues about how that world is experienced. Herein lies the nucleus of how that world is experienced. The hermeneutic phenomenological approach used in this study is based on thematic analyses of descriptions of lived experiences revealed in personal photographs.

My Preference for Using Hermeneutic-Phenomenology

As I learned about hermeneutic phenomenology, I felt as if I had discovered an approach to investigative inquiry which fit in a powerful way with my research orientation. As I reflect upon the initial appeal to this approach, it was the return to the lived experience of human beings that drew me towards this

methodology. Such naturalistic inquiry offered me a space for being genuinely engaged in the research process. It allowed me to not only describe but also to personalize and to interpret what I might uncover. This was important to me as a researcher as my aim was to seek an understanding that could accommodate what makes sense on a personal level and a conceptual one; the universal and the particular. As a perspective that honors both the particular experiences of an individual as well as the universal qualities of a concept, a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach seeks the light of awareness through the understanding of the individual. This gave my work as a researcher a sense of integrity that lead the research process forward.

In this research study the symbols found in the captured moments of lived experience highlighted essential themes which were generated by the photo-assisted interviewing process and lead the investigation towards an understanding of a deepened meaning of the hope experience. Themes revealed themselves visually within the photographs, and photographs conveying the themes were selected and included in the interpretations of the findings.

The Researcher's Worldview (Presuppositions and Values)

From the beginning of this research project I was committed to maintain the integrity and the uniqueness of each individual. It was important that the lives of the young women in my study were honored and respected as individuals. Despite my on-going personal fears as a novice researcher, I continually worked towards a feeling of congruence within myself and the young women who served as co-researchers in my examination of their sense of hope.

Who am I as a researcher?

I believe in hope. I believe in the spiritual hope of my Catholic religion and the personal lived hope I have witnessed throughout my lifetime. My spiritual hope

is often expressed in a formal prayer or simply in the smile I give a loved one or a stranger. I believe in sharing hope on the wings of thoughtfulness.

I feel certain that a human being just cannot live without hope. Emily Dickinson wrote it well when she sang the song of hope in her beautiful words:

> Hope is the thing with feathers
> That perches in your soul,
> And sings the tune without the words,
> And never stops at all.
> (Emily Dickinson in Fields Of Gold)

That's where my hope was planted a long time ago and there it rests, in my soul. Hope breathes life into my existence. I trust in it and I appreciate it. Hope has a magical music and it sings throughout my being.

I bring to this important investigation the history of my November birth into a large Irish Catholic family of twelve children, my childhood days of roaming on the beaches and chasing caplin fish, my adolescent years as a church folk guitarist and the years of growth into the maturity of womanhood- all within the setting of a small Newfoundland ocean town.

My mother Loretta worked as a school teacher in my hometown, she is a caring sister, a loving mother and a woman of example, courage and strength. My father Julian ('Mr. Jule') was a miner, as well as a fisherman. Actually, he was more than that. He was an architect and a carpenter - he built our two-story house, and he was an engineer - he built his own fishing boat, a huge skiff. He also owned a local movie theatre. I have three sisters, eight brothers, one of whom is my twin brother. My life has been blessed by the people that have loved me and those whom I have loved. I have also experienced the painfulness of loss and I continue to be saddened by those losses, although I am learning to understand them differently.

It was perhaps there in the emotional struggle of loss that I have learned most about hope. Although to witness human suffering is difficult, the hope of those who have suffered has been inspirational to me. Today I am studying hope

not to seek answers but always to seek an understanding. Still, I am left with questions.

How does a terminally-ill person find hope? How is it that she doesn't give up when her leg has been amputated due to diabetes and water has seeped around her heart? How is it that he doesn't give up when his weight has dropped to one hundred pounds with cancer as the parasite? How and why does he smile at me? How does a chronically depressed person lift his head and find hope? How does a young child understand the tears of a parent when the parent tells her "I am dying but you have to go on with your life and do well." How does the adult who was once that young child consciously visit this memory and find peace? It is not easy. But believing in hope, its' mystery and its' power makes it possible.

The seeds of my intentional investigation into the mystery of hope began with Dr. Ronna Jevne, my professor at the time, who is now my research supervisor. I remember how she spoke to me about hope in the most authentic way and that resonated with me. In her eyes I could see her commitment to hope inquiry and the gentle touch of humanness that I believe research into hope requires. I realized that to engage in a research study around hope would mean travelling beyond an academic framework. For me it was and remains personal.

I began to get to know my hope better through reflections upon my past experiences and through a photographic self-project that illustrated the symbols of my hope. This was important for me as a researcher because in this "Story Book Of Hope" my presuppositions were revealed. These included hope in prayer, hope in God, hope found in family especially loved ones who had passed away, hope found in the elderly, hope found in my lifeboat and hope found on an empty parkbench overlooking my world. I returned to presuppositions throughout the research study, reviewing the identified ones and recognizing, while documenting others as they arose. It is critical for researchers to always be mindful of their

presuppositions so as to understand how they might be influencing the sense they make of their explorations. This process is an on-going one during research. I learned the importance of this during one of my experiences on the journey of becoming a more hermeneutical-phenomenological researcher...

Learning an important lesson...

When you have grown up in the same town where your research is leading you, you might tend to think you know more about what to expect throughout the research process. This is quite untrue. Who was I to think that just because I too had grown up here in this little town of green, rocks and salty air that I knew anything of the experience of the young women whom I would be learning about. For some reason I felt as though I knew lots about them. Ha! Was I in for a surprise!

Despite my on-going practice of bracketing and acknowledgment of biases and presuppositions, it wasn't until my somehow etched-in- stone research agenda didn't go exactly on schedule that I realized how much more developing I had to do!

It was May 10, 2000, the evening of our second scheduled meeting. I had travelled down the south coast of the province and reserved my hotel the afternoon before. I had arrived here with my "Schedule." I had meetings arranged and a structure which would soon become obsolete in the most humorous way. That second meeting did not go as I had so strictly planned. Several of the young women didn't make it - couldn't make it although the evening before I was assured that everyone was free. Secondly, Mrs. Ena Edwards, a well-known Canadian east coast writer, who had generously agreed to share her stories with the women regarding photography and life experiences became ill and was not able to make it. This left, the researcher, me, in the strangest panic. I recall, shamefully, not being able to quite grasp that all wasn't going well. I think that my panic was all about

trying to save the ruination of my schedule. Initially I scurried to make the most of the situation. I was upset with the change that had been thrown my way unexpectedly.

I learned a great deal that evening as I later sat in delight with the three women who were able to make it. We engaged in simple, free and enjoyable conversation. I had an opportunity to get to know them and they were able to learn about me. I also had occasion to reflect upon my school days and share those memories with them. It was a most beautiful interaction. When I think about it now, I describe it as sitting in a room filled with smiles.

When I arrived to my hotel room later, I walked towards the tiny round table in the hotel room, opened my blue colored writing pad and began to write: Dear self, I laugh in your face! How silly you are...how silly to think that your schedule, which claimed to hold a sensitive flexibility, would be that important!! Chuckling then won out over the words. I sat back and smiled at myself. It was a lesson I needed to learn. Off I went to the hotel restaurant and enjoyed a delicious meal of potato skins and chicken. I guess my hardened schedule had become appropriately meaningless. I am glad that it did. This experience gave me new eyes and ears. I needed that and so does any researcher who claims to seek a genuine understanding of the lived experience of others. Putting my agenda aside was liberating. Given this new, but old perspective I learned that no research is without expectations but it is the responsibility of the researcher to keep watch on the sneaky threads of needing to control, of finding evidence that suits an already established world-view that just might drift into the research experience.

Method

Entering the Field

Field entry for this research investigation was not difficult. In fact in many ways it was 'going home' for me, back to this town, to the ocean, to the school and to adolescence. I grew up in this same town, attended the same school and perhaps dreamed dreams on the same beaches as the young women who helped me with my research project. I left this town many years ago, maybe even before my physical move to the city. This research brought me home.

The school principal was delighted to learn about this research potential and immediately agreed to help me find the young women who would possibly be my co-researchers. Through on-going communication with him, my hope study information packages were distributed to twelve interested female adolescent students in the 11th and 12th grades, after being invited by the principal to participate. All female adolescents of the 11th and 12th grades were informed about the study recruitment. Once I received the names of the young women who were interested in being part of the study, I screened the list upon arriving at the school.

> It has been some time since I have visited here. This gray colored rental car drives independent of my skills, as I travel the journey of Newfoundland's south coast towards the anticipated stories of hope. What can I expect? Will hope be the host of a joke, a laugh or will it be respected? Will everything go OK? Will they want to stay once we have talked about the project? So many anxious questions. I turn up the radio and drown my fears of uncertainty. I am not the girl that left - I am a woman, a researcher. Most importantly I am pleased to be going back, excited to be a researcher and so eager to meet these females. But I am afraid. Yes - I am afraid but I continue on my way. I drive forward with the hope and promise of success. (Journal Entry, May 9, 2000).

Upon arrival my fears lessened. The young women that greeted me were enthusiastic and excited about the possibilities that lay ahead.

Engaging the Co-researchers

"The purpose of selecting subjects in phenomenological research is to generate a full range of variation in the set of descriptions to be used in analyzing a phenomena" (Polkinghorne, 1978, p. 48). Typically qualitative research concentrates on a small number of cases. "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth" (Patton, 1990, p. 169). The researcher needs as many participants as it takes to illuminate the phenomenon (Wertz, 1984).

From the initial group of twelve interested females, there were six female adolescents who actually volunteered for this study. Parental permission was later withdrawn for one volunteer. I had met with this specific volunteer on one occasion during the initial introductory group meeting. The day that I learned she would not be participating proved to be somewhat awkward, if not emotional for me. I had met her as a person, no longer as a name and she had made such an impression upon me. I soon discovered my attachment to these young women. I struggled with letting one go - with letting her go...

> You appear to storm past me in the school foyer, and then you stop to speak to me. We exchange glances and I find in your eyes a look of disturbance. I wonder what is happening. I then learn that you are not allowed to participate. "I guess I won't be able to do this afterall," you mumbled. I said, "That's OK." You then leave the school, bolting past the principal and through the exit door. I am left with such a feeling of regret. I am saddened that your enthusiasm has been squashed. I know I saw your eagerness just the evening before. I wonder if you are OK. (Journal Entry, May 9, 2000.

> "Ms. Stella, Gentle Thunder said to me, "you know H really wanted to be part of this hope project but...ah...her Dad didn't get her camera to her or something like that...but I know that she wanted to do it with us."...I guess I am left to wonder what really happened that day H's father came into the school and she left with him quite angrily as she exclaimed that she couldn't be part of the project. Gentle Thunder's comments seemed to offer some answers. These comments will have to suffice.... (Journal Entry - May 23, 2001. Strolling together through the local cemetery).

My five female adolescent co-researchers ranged in age from sixteen to nineteen. Three were in grade eleven and two were in grade twelve at the time of the interview. (Currently three of the co-researchers are completing their final year of high school, one of whom is preparing for motherhood and two have relocated to the city to attend the provincial university.) All lived at home with their families in a small rural town of nine hundred and fifty people.

There are two hundred and ten students and sixteen and a half staff members in this kindergarten through grade twelve school. On two occasions, during the past twenty years (1980 and 1999), the district school board has threatened to close this school. Due to the protest and perseverance of the school staff, supported by the people of the town, the school remains open - "alive."

There were variations in affluence, socioeconomic background and academic status amongst my co-researchers. One announced to me with apparent pride that "I am the oldest student in this school...people laughs but I don't care. I tell them I have no intention of flipping burgers the rest of my life." (D1 - free flowing conversation at initial group meeting). Two other co-researchers had just recently been awarded academic scholarships to attend Memorial University. Another was referred to by her school principal during our initial introductions as " one of the brightest students that I have here." (School Principal, May 9, 2000). One other co-researcher made average grades but scored high in intramural sports.

All but two have felt the painful effects of the deteriorating local and provincial economies due to the recent hardships associated with the fishery. Three of the co-researchers came from families directly connected to the success or failure of the fishery. One of the remaining co-researchers has been privileged with a stable financial background unaffected by the local economy. Both parents are school teachers. The final co-researcher's lifestyle was not directly linked to the fishery because her mother was a school teacher and her now deceased father was a

carpenter. None of the co-researchers were part of large families of twelve and thirteen which was more common in the days of the past.

Each person engaged fully in what was referred to as "Our Hope Project" and was enthusiastic to begin! I was pleased to sense that this was their project. They were confident and pleased that this project would be about them, their town, their hope. They all lived with hope.

Their reasons for deciding to become part of this research study were to "talk about this town, these people, our people and our hope." (May, 9, 2000 - free flowing conversation with all co-researchers). The interview process danced with joy and sometimes stood still in sorrow. Stories of life experiences were most often spoken in struggle. Other times the stories came more freely, filled with words of delight and optimism as well as worry, pain, frustration and resignation. It was easy to forget where one was sitting when drifting fully and completely into the space of another human being as she so willingly shared herself. There was openness, trust, respect, and honesty - a cocoon of sacred space.

As hope experiences were related and photographs described, an incredible intimacy joined us in the room. Stories unfolded the deep, rich core of their lived experiences of hope. These were shared with me as precious treasures, they have stayed with me. I remember the kindness, love, courage, fear, uncertainty and the loyalty. I remember each time my heart beat fast or stood still in awe of these young women.

More About The Co-researchers and Their Town

My co-researchers are the proud daughters of an Irish Newfoundland town. Their town is their home. One learns this almost immediately when you meet these five energetic young women. They are proud of their little town and ready to talk about it. Growing up here has been an experience of love, friendships, hardships, victories, disappointments and traditions. To them, their town is simply a tiny

paradise. With rolling hills of green, an ocean at your fingertips, a wind blowing in freshness against your face and the black rocks blending into the rugged terrain, one can only stand in awe of this raw beauty.

All five are of the Roman Catholic faith, a religion lived in their homes and in their community. As proud celebrants of Irish tradition, these young women honor their religion in prayer and thanksgiving. They know prayer well. It is likely that in each of their homes one would find a crucifix hanging on a wall. This is the faith. Their world does not involve much of the secular. Religion and prayer, as tradition would have it, are embedded in their upbringing.

St. Patrick's Day is a time to sing, tap-dance and celebrate. Each year an annual St. Patrick's Day concert is held and everyone in the 'little green town' gathers together to enjoy the tunes of St. Paddy. "Top of the mornin' te ya!" would be the only greeting you would get on that morning.

Soccer is essential to the life of this town. It is the sport of their lives! One co-researcher referred to soccer as being the "poor man's sport." I personally had never heard it said that way before. She said it not in shame of the financial difficulties of her community but with gleaming eyes and a bursting pride. Two of the co-researchers themselves have played soccer on a local soccer team, "even with the boys."

These Newfoundland daughters are genuine and they are real. Perhaps without even knowing it, they are the sources of continuity of their town, in the stories they are so eager to share. These Irish Catholic Newfoundland women are very special. They are specifically special to me.

Preparing Myself As A Researcher

In qualitative investigations, "the credibility of the study is especially dependent on the credibility of the researcher because the researcher is often the instrument of data collection and the centre of the analysis process" (Patton, 1990,

p. 461). Preparation as a researcher is imperative to the role of researcher. For me, the preparation process had both professional and personal components.

In a formal preparation for this research investigation I completed two graduate courses in qualitative research and I attended a qualitative workshop (focused on phenomenology) with Dr. Max van Manen, the author by whom much of my research process has been guided. In addition to reading phenomenological work, I have engaged in an active practice of becoming a phenomenological person. Immersed in a space of personal freedom and starting over in the development of my life's philosophy, this practice has been essentially personal, and magnificently meaningful.

> My eyes dance around this parlor filled with waltzing elderly folk. The joy of being here is breathtaking. I have joined my brother Julian and his band in a musical charity Christmas event, singing Christmas carols and sharing the spirit of Christmas with these older people. I have never met any of you but my heart has met you all at once. So much joy, peace and freedom. I take the microphone into my hands and I begin to sing 'Silent Night'. No one is dancing now. You are all sitting, watching and listening. You have given my heart wings. (Personal Reflection, December 18, 2000 - Senior's Home at Meadows, Newfoundland).

In my quest to sensitize myself to the role of hope photographer I engaged in a personal photography project aimed at exploring my images of hope. In turn, I invited a colleague to interview me about my images of hope and other forms of hope for me such as my father's hammer, a four-leaf clover, a gift given to me by my brother Gerry when I was a teenager, a paper rose given to me by my sister Cecilia, a guitar given to me by my sister Marie, and bunches of dried roses.

With the interview occurring within two days of the film development, I was vigilant about maintaining an immediate perspective regarding the photo explanations. This personal photographic journey into my own hope experiences, a personal pilot study of sorts, enlightened me both as a researcher and as a person. It became clear that the photography process must not be rushed as photographing hope was not as straightforward as I had assumed it would be. Nonetheless, a

thoughtful examination of my images of hope helped elicit and highlight the personal presuppositions about hope that I carried.

My role as interviewee in a previous research project investigating counsellor hope also prepared me for my role as a future researcher. As an interviewee I was able to experience the dynamics of being interviewed around the concept of hope and gain further exposure to the qualitative open-ended interviewing process. As well I learned more about my personal presuppositions about hope from my Irish Catholic upbringing in a small Newfoundland town. I was reminded of my own principles, my personal forms of visiting hope and the evolvement of my prayerful hope through the examples set by significant individuals throughout my lifetime.

My personal preparation as a researcher involved returning to my 'maritime self,' my roots, the remembrance of traditions, music and the words of people from some time ago. In a phenomenological sense, I had returned to the 'things themselves' that contributed towards the development of myself as a lived and living human being. This existential investigation was critical to the contextual shaping of my knowledge of where this research was about to take me and where I was about to take it.

Her Majesty

While I returned to St. John's, my home, for my personal preparation, I soon knew that I needed to travel to the shores of the smaller town, to the "outports" of Newfoundland. I drove towards the ocean. When I reached it, I stood close to it and became captivated by 'Her Majesty'. Stormy, windy and gray, I was taken back to a time when I stared at an angry ocean in wonder. It was when the ocean showered me in wet salt that I felt the magic of bringing myself back as a person to a point of being ready. Something victorious occurred within my soul. I raised my arms high and I shouted "Shower me and let me remember

you great ocean, let me remember who I am!" With this salty spray, the Atlantic Ocean had welcomed me back. In a concrete way it was my first step towards entering the field in this research study. Although I was miles away from the research site, I knew that this was the same ocean that surrounded the young women who would become my co-researchers. In a sense I met them that day and with this trip to the ocean, I was prepared for the rest of the research journey.

Three weeks later I began a second journey towards another small town, the research site where the beauty of soulful young women who dared and trusted to share their thoughts, feelings and souls waited. How honored I was to accept all that they were willing to give.

> We have met and I feel in my heart that we have connected. Not because we are simply daughters of this same Newfoundland town but because we are females, women and we have thoughts and ideas and missions to accomplish and words to be spoken - and heard. I feel that the word research simply doesn't seem appropriate when I reflect upon the intimate conversations that have revealed your personal experiences, hopes and dreams. Somehow the words research and interview resonate a shallow tone. I am fearful of colliding you against words which could ultimately lose you. I am fearful that you as the women you are will slip through the fingers of my written words. (Journal Entry -June 26, 2000).

Research Activities

Photo-Assisted Interviewing

Three individual interviews per co-researcher occurred over a six month period. Prior to the interviewing process, I met with the co-researchers as a group on two other occasions. The first one hour meeting was to serve as an orientation to the study and an opportunity to explore concerns, discuss the issue of confidentiality and to gather written parental consent. I had spoken previously with all parents confirming the nature of the study.

The second one hour meeting was a discussion regarding the 24 exposure disposable cameras that I provided to each of the three co-researchers who were present. I reviewed the use of the disposable camera, ensuring that each co-

researcher was comfortable using it. After an explicit demonstration of the camera, I observed each co-researcher operate her camera during a practice shot. The two who were absent were later given written instructions of the camera use and invited to meet at their convenience for a demonstration.

Permission slips were given to each co-researcher in the event she wished to get permission to take a person's picture with the intention of including it in her photography component. In addition, each co-researcher was given the same instructions regarding the photography component. This was also addressed thoroughly during the previous meeting the night before. Each co-researcher was reminded to ask herself "What is hope for me?" and to take photographs that captured her 'hope' and represented her 'experience' of hope. Each co-researcher was given a summary of these instructions as well as my local telephone number, home telephone number and email address in the event she needed to contact me the regarding any concerns. I also checked in with the co-researchers inquiring into the photography experience.

Collection of Cameras

Two weeks later I collected the 24 exposure disposable cameras from my co-researchers at the local high school. When I telephoned each co-researcher to remind her about the pick-up date, the co-researchers asked for one more week to complete their photographic activity. This request was respected. The film was processed at a city approximately four hours away from the research site.

The First Interviews

The first interviews were generally one to one and a half hours. Fieldnotes, personal reflections and journal entries were made in between interviews. Interviews were not transcribed until the following weekend. Time at the site was used for interviewing, journal writing and personal reflections. All interviews were audiotaped and then transcribed.

The photo-assisted interviewing process began with an invitation to each co-researcher to sit wherever she felt comfortable. She was then invited to take a look at her hope photos and to begin her explanations either at the desk where we were sitting or move to the floor. All co-researchers chose to sit near the desk.

Each co-researcher was given her photos and I re-explained that the conversation would be audiotatped on a Dictaphone. An example was demonstrated. She was then asked to choose a favorite picture or more simply, choose any picture to begin. I sat to the left of the co-researcher, without a writing pad thinking that a writing pad might disturb the co-researcher. I knew that it would disturb me.

All co-researchers took all 24 of the possible pictures on their cameras. When asked about this, each co-researcher appeared glad to have had the opportunity to take 24 shots and expressed that "I needed more than twelve." While they had been encouraged to aim for at least 12 photos, a 24 exposure film had been chosen to allow for errors or extra shots that the co-researchers wanted to take.

Throughout the interviewing process each story and explanation gave the photo a sense of spirit and life. Some photos held joy and others sadness. While each photo was explored thoroughly, I was vigilant as the researcher to observe for possible signs of emotional stress. Opportunity was given to return to any of the photos in the event a co-researcher felt she had missed something.

At the end of the initial interview, each co-researcher was invited to choose a favorite photo so that I could develop an 8 by 10 copy of it for her and frame it. Each co-researcher was delighted to know this. One co-researcher was uncertain about her photo of choice and we decided that I would make contact with her before the next interview and find out if she had made a decision. This worked well for her. The co-researchers decided that they would like to hang their photos in the

school hallway. While I agreed that this sounded like a good idea, we re-discussed the issue of confidentiality. Interestingly, each co-researcher wanted to include her name on the back of her photo. When I sent the photos to the home addresses of the co-researchers with a small thank-you note written on the back, I decided it was their decision to write or not to write their names on the photos.

The Second Interviews

The second 'interview - conversations' lasted for approximately 40 minutes. From our first interviews, it became clear to me that these were more like shared conversations than formal interviews. The term interview- conversations captures the intimacy of our interactions better than the word interview. As with our first ones, these conversations were audiotaped and fully transcribed. Three of the co-researchers further elaborated to clarify points from their first conversation with me. One co-researcher said "No...ah...that's OK, I have said what I wanted to say," and the last one was more interested in what I was thinking regarding what she had said in the first interview. The second interview-conversations were used as an opportunity to discuss emerging themes with the co-researchers and to create names that would honor their anonymity yet still speak to their character. I asked them to think about some names I had developed. Together we eventually chose names that delighted each of them.

The Third Interviews

The third interview-conversations were generally thirty minutes or even less. These were only partially transcribed. Member checks were conducted as thematic analysis was discussed. Saturation of the data was marked by a repetition of the themes and the exhaustion of hope stories. Contact was on-going with the co-researchers as the interpretation of the findings emerged and unfolded.

Trustworthiness

"Becoming immersed in a study requires passion: passion for people, passion for communication, and passion for understanding people." (Janesick, 1989, p. 217). This research study is held in my passion for gaining a deeper understanding of hope and my quest for understanding people. Well before any academic decisions were made about this investigation, there was already a passion burning in its direction. This research activity has been my attempt to listen most carefully, communicate most effectively and engage in this human investigation process most fully.

Experience and training in the field of Counselling Psychology, previous employment experience as a high school teacher and later as a school guidance counsellor, in the province of Newfoundland, lend credibility to me as a research instrument. My experience as a therapist influenced the facilitation of an appropriate atmosphere and rapport significant to the 'interview- conversation' process. My specific interest in working with female adolescents as a teacher and school counsellor provided me ample opportunities to have previously entered into their worlds.

To ensure the trustworthiness of this study, from the beginning I consulted with my supervisor on matters related to the study. Through on-going personal reflections I recorded my own experiences, views and understandings of hope, adolescence and growing up in rural Newfoundland. Being a Newfoundlander, having attended their school and lived in their town meant the sharing of mutual stories, laughs and points of saddened reflection. This proved to be a significant basis for establishing rapport. Being 'one of their own' established trust.

> In small towns all over the world, something happens for townspeople when a stranger drives into their town. People are uncertain and all eyes are wanting to find answers. Although I am not a stranger to this town by any means, I am a stranger to these people as a woman. I am preoccupied with

> my worries around being accepted back after all this time. I am relieved when I learn that my town is glad to take me into the fold and most willing to share their daughters with me for this investigation. I am warmly grateful for their hospitality and their kindness. (Personal Reflection, May 7, 2000).

In order to enhance the relevance and rigor of this study's research findings, the issue of trustworthiness was addressed throughout the entire research process. "Care must be taken by researchers as they interpret reports form others describing their experiences" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 46). During data analyses I shared my conceptualizations of the emerging themes with the co-researchers, and adjusted them in a fashion which allowed for a co-creation of major themes. Data findings evolved through both verbal and visual information sources.

Thick descriptions and quotes were used in the interpretations of the findings revealing support for the thematic analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1992; Rudestam & Newton, 1992). A secondary literature review was also conducted based upon the research results and an audit trail was documented tracing the entire research process.

Data triangulation allowed for the cross referencing of the data. The data sources of this study included the symbolic hope photographs taken by the co-researchers, the verbal explanations that accompanied the photographs found in the text, the co-researcher's personal life stories, and the literature about hope. Journalling, field notes and personal reflections recorded throughout interviews provide further support for the dependability of this study. (Bibby, 1993, Guba & Lincoln, 1992; Rudestam & Newton, 1992). Dependability describes a consistency of data collection, analysis process and research results (Patton, 1990).

My attention to rigor has been ongoing and intentional throughout the entire study. Furthermore it has been my intention to deliver the stories of the co-researchers in a way that is completely honorable and respectful while illuminating an understanding of hope in this context.

Thematic Analysis

The purpose of data analysis "is to derive from the collection of protocols, with their naive descriptions to specific examples of the experience under consideration, a description of the essential features of that experience" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p.50). These essential features, the phenomenological themes, are the structures of experience in qualitative research. Researcher and co-researchers uncover the themes in a collaborative effort which mines the essential meaning of the experience under investigation in "a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure...a free act of seeing meaning" (van Manen, 1990, p. 79).

Using van Manen (1990) as my guide, thematic analysis began with the data collection. Ideas regarding explicit meaning were documented as the fundamental meaning of the text unfolded. In a reflective, intuitive style, I read each text several times and highlighted what statements or phrases appeared specifically essential to the experience being described. This is referred to as a selective or highlighting approach (van Manen, 1990) and is used to isolate the themes of hope in the text of this study. These highlighted pieces were then paraphrased as emergent themes into meaningful units and then shared with the co-researchers of this study. To van Manen (1990), such corroboration with the co-researchers is called member checking. Through this and free imaginative variation emerging themes were verified and confirmed by my co-researchers.

Multiple re-readings and review of the photographs throughout the writing up of this research study contributed to my reflection and in-dwelling as I gained insight into the essence of the lived experience of hope of the co-researchers. In the process of reflection I journeyed back to the data in attempts to bridge ideas and engage in thoughtfulness. "In-dwelling was the creative process of living with the data constantly in one's mind until some insight occurs" (Keen, 2000, p. 71). This process often showed itself in the wee hours of the morning.

> Last night I had the strangest dream - or was it even a dream? I awoke to the sound of my own voice speaking the language of phenomenology and writing the psychological lines of insight. Although I felt incredibly strange, I jumped out of bed, jotted down my ideas and went back to sleep. In-dwelling was the culprit of my night's sleep I guess... (Personal Reflection, October 15, 2001).

In addition to mindful reflection and artful in- dwelling, an unmistakable intimacy with the data occurred due to the fact that this researcher transcribed the text. Brief paraphrasing of the discovered meaning and preliminary categorization of the codes occurred naturally while engaging in the transcription process. Recording the spoken words in written form bonded me with the data in such a manner that the voices still remain vividly clear and the words are still identifiable to each speaker. Doing my own transcriptions proved to be essential for my becoming intimate with the data.

Re-playing the audio-tapes highlighted the emotional expression of our conversations. Sometimes respected pauses and loaded silences spoke more loudly than language itself. To understand the 'collective she' was to understand her pauses and silences. There in the silence of her presence was often the strength of someone beyond her years. There in the intimate space of trusting conversation was the vulnerability of her person. It was here that her soulfulness radiated and I observed and listened in wonder. It was here that the depths of interpretation could be reached.

The hermeneutic perspective, in its interpretive design directed the analysis towards an intensity and richness, seemingly towards the human heart and soul of each co-researcher's words and silences. While coded meaning units did not adequately reach deep enough into this space, a hermeneutical perspective generated a greater understanding of the meaning of the hope experience .

Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct this study was granted when the research proposal was approved by the Ethics Review Committee in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. All co-researchers signed written consent forms before participating (Appendix 1). Parental consent forms were also signed (Appendix 2). In addition, the School Principal was asked to sign an oath of confidentiality (Appendix 3). The forms included the purpose of the research, information that the interviews would be taped and transcribed, the concept of voluntary participation as well as the rights of the co-researchers to refuse to answer any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time without any explanation.

Confidentiality guidelines were addressed, and co-researchers were ensured that the interviews would not be shared with others with the exception of research purposes. Through the use of fictitious names for co-researchers and their institution, it was explained to the co-researchers that their identities would remain anonymous.

All transcriptions were specifically coded and safely stored. The very nature of the topic hope meant that this research would be personal, perhaps eliciting deep feelings and the expression of those feelings. The researcher monitored the reactions of the co-researchers and basic counselling skills were used if signs of distress or discomfort were noted. Throughout the course of the research study telephone check-ins were utilized to maintain contact and rapport.

Ultimately I feel that the greatest ethical consideration is that of respectfulness of the human person. The human persons who co-researched this investigation were held in respectfulness throughout the entire study. The following personal reflection speaks to my respectfulness.

"My Very Precious Salt Water Pearls"

I'm not sure exactly why, but sometimes I feel like all of you are porcelain dolls and here you are in my care - held in my hands. I am careful not to drop any piece of you for fear that I may lose you. Being porcelain doesn't necessarily mean that you are especially breakable or delicate. You are not fragile but you are indeed rare, rare pearls of your Atlantic ocean floor. I hold you carefully in my awareness, I listen as I have never listened before, I cherish our time together and I will hold you in a most special memory. Thank you for sharing yourselves with me. I sincerely thank you. (Personal Reflection, July, 2000).

CHAPTER FOUR

STORIES OF OUR IMAGES OF HOPE

This chapter will introduce the life-worlds of the five co-researchers of this research study. Stories around their images of hope will be shared. Each story accompanied by photographs contains a synopsis of the co-researcher's relevant life experiences which provide insights into their individual hope experiences. Please note that the words of the co-researchers' direct quotations are not misspelled although they may appear to be. They are, however, intentionally written to sound as they were spoken so as to honor the cultural dialect. Thick descriptions using direct quotations create the bridges between photos and experiences.

Throughout this chapter a reader will witness the sharing of sacred stories of the hope experiences of these "women". The co-researchers specifically asked to be called women. Throughout many meaningful conversations with these women I became their honored guest, a listener - my ears full of curiosity, eyes bright and clear, a mind that learned to stretch its parameters and embrace the fullness of the journey, and a heart more filled with respect and gratefulness than ever imagined.

> All of their stories are so very ready to be told. I find myself visualizing these "women" on a race track, feet pressed against starting blocks, eyes focused on the task and bodies anticipating the burst of blasting forward and setting themselves free as they charge forward in self expression and advocation. So much needs to be told it seems. Stories rich in loyalty to community and traditions, stories which testify to the maturity of these women, and stories of appreciation of family, heritage and love of "This Place called Home". Sadness lives there in many of the stories. But none are without hope. (Personal Reflection, May 23, 2000).

While these stories are the sources of data , a collection of experiences which reflect a shared quality, simultaneously each story is more than 'merely' a source of shared data - each story is uniquely a person. Each person is essentially a 'core' - searcher of the experience of hope.

Each co-researcher's life story, represented in the images of photographs, speaks directly to her hope, and experiences of hope are intricately woven throughout the events of her life stories. Each hope photograph will delicately yet powerfully shape, support and share the journey of its photographer. Sometimes the stories were ones of explicit hope, readiness for new hope, survival and hope, fondness of hope, a friendship with hope or simply statements that testify to the fact that hope, although sometimes secretive, is alive and well.

If a reader of these stories listens carefully to one's reading, and if I have delivered the stories as to allow the reader to listen in interest, then the reader will move closer to the freckled faces, blushed cheeks, timid glances, Reebok sneakers, personal diaries and the fiery eyes of these young women. These women shine throughout the sharing of their stories, unquestionably ignited from within.

> Congregated for our first meeting in the forth grade classroom of the local school, six young "Women", pulled colored plastic chairs away from square black desk tops and formed somewhat of a semi-circle. I inquired if the circle was comfortable. The group was informed by one person that the circle seemed a "little crunched together" and with a sigh of relief she positioned herself more comfortably. All co-researchers were apparently quite interested in the project and referred to it as "Our Hope Project." Questions were put forth without much hesitation. One adolescent asked "If I take a picture of some - 'thing', would that be OK/right?" Another wondered "Is this about what hope is or is it about what hope means?" It became clear that these co-researchers had been preparing for their project, had questions and uncertainties.
>
> As I looked into their faces I felt as though I could see myself in a reflection. I was reminded of this school that I too had attended. I felt the presence of each individual sitting either in front or around me. I saw one shaking foot and then another. One person dazed forward as though in thought and another appeared distant and stern faced from time to time. Often I caught myself wondering "Is this going OK?" or more honestly, "Am I doing this right?" I would soon learn from the sources themselves that this was "going all right." There were giggles and laughs, smiles and stares, as all of them tended to lean forward as I continued to respond to questions and arrange for meeting #2 the following day. After 45 minutes our first meeting ended. The "Women" had things to do and places to go and dinner to prepare for families. Off they went shouting "See Ya Ms. Edwards and Thanks Ms. Edwards". I was filled with pride and joy but not even sure why. (Journal Entry - May 9, 2001).

I have carefully chosen a special name for each of the co-researchers versus assigning any given pseudo name. I have done so because each co-researcher, in

her uniqueness was deserving of a name which sought to highlight this uniqueness. I am delighted to present the stories of these women and to the best of my ability give each person a name that reflects her humanness. I invite the reader to accept a description given in either a word or brief phrase that bears a significance around the co-researchers as persons, identifying these persons according to how they spoke, sniffled, chuckled, sang and photographed themselves to me.

Gentle Thunder - Shouting Gently Her Stories of Hope

"Just like ridin' on a bike - get on a bike, ye fall down and ye get right back up"

> She nonreluctantly threw her voice into conversation with her School Principal. Her voice, her posturing and her eyes caught my attention. She stood confidently in the school hallway, as if this was her home. I introduced myself to her and as I did I was amazed by the fact that I could remember her name from years ago, not long after she was born. She was quick to ask me about the Utah Jazz basketball team knowing that I was living in Utah. We expressed a mutual admiration for the sport. She sat just slightly to my right, when we, as a research group, congregated to the fourth grade classroom. She joked around. She later told me that my smile in response to one of her jokes helped her to relax and feel comfortable. I hear her voice as I write about her. It is penetrating, yet not harsh. It shouts but it is gentle. I also hear her sniffles. They seem to be aching. (Journal Entry - May 9, 2000).

She earns the name Gentle Thunder quite easily. This woman leads our conversation, is the owner of her experience, has a specific agenda, is charged and eager to share. Her voice appears to be captured in the struggle of shouting to be heard yet the messages delivered are wrapped in sensitivity and soft heartedness. Seated close beside me, wearing black basketball shorts, a dark green tank top, sandals, her sandy brown hair hanging loosely in a ponytail cascading about her red face, she began her story. She is organized. Her life story unfolds as one that has embraced the traditions of her ancestors, exchanged soulful learning with others and now, amidst uncertainty trusts in her plan to move forward.

Her Hope is Learned; Her Hope is Shared

Being "pushed to grow" (B1. p.6) in various ways by significant others is something for which sixteen year old Gentle Thunder is specifically thankful. "People are very important to me." (B1. p.6). The relentless strength and courage of influential people in her life have taught her how to find strength and hope in times of difficulty. She shares her complete admiration for her disabled sister.

> She works so hard and she's so strong, for a person that's got **soooo** much going against her - she fought to try to win and she'll work harder even though the odds are down and I hope that some day I can be as strong as her. (B1. p.2)

Gentle Thunder has learned that fighting against the odds is not an easy fight nor is it impossible. Her personal vow to find a fighting hope is one that she has learned from this one sister who is confined to a wheelchair. Although there is a sense of sadness when Gentle Thunder talks about her sister, there is more profoundly a distinct sense of pride.

> When there's stuff going against me it makes me want to strive harder - cause you knows when someone got so much going against her and can still do what she does. She **NEVER** wanted to be in a wheelchair!! (B1. p.2).

Emotions rise to the surface as her heart over flows in stories around her sister and mother, a mother who has made many sacrifices for her family to ensure that "I am not limited in my life." (B1. p 6). "She has given me a sense of respect for myself." (B1. p. 7). Gentle Thunder's mother is a source of hope for her. Her mother's caring hope is shared in her kindness and her giving to others. Despite challenging economic times her mother is able to keep going and find the means to

survive. This fight is not an easy one but it can be done and her mother has taught her so.

> She don't want me to be limited (sniffles) to anything - she's always wanted me to be the best that I can be. (B1. p.7). Like last year I went to Edmonton and it was a few thousand dollars to get me up there and she didn't have to give it to me - the fishery wasn't even hardly going but - I said it's all right - it don't matter but **SHE** got it - she paid it off and did without a lot. I hope someday I can be as good a mother as she is. And I wants to be like that and I wants to give to people - I don't always want to receive, receive, receive. (B2. p. 10)

Throughout the storying of her hope experiences Gentle Thunder's desire to be heard continues to fill the room, seemingly pushing all else aside and giving space only to the speaker. As she proceeds sniffles echo throughout her stories. They are tearful, saddened and somehow lonely. I feel her ache and my heart listens. She cares deeply about her family and is aware of how life has been hard for them, showing a mature understanding of the effects of hard times on people. Her delicate messages about family strength and survival are nestled in her sniffling heart.

> As I witness the beauty of this young woman's heart while it expresses her respect for the diligent work of her mother, I begin to notice that her nose is crying. She still sits upright and strong-postured but her sniffles betray her. I feel certain that if her nose couldn't sniffle, then perhaps her eyes would and there would have been a tear. (Personal Reflection, May 17, 2001).

Other sources of hope that have touched Gentle Thunder's life and taught her the fight of hope are found in community members. This small community of about nine hundred and fifty is described as being a "Big Family, really that's what it is like...ah.. one big family ... leaving here would be like leaving your family" (B2. p. 21).

> So many people that is role models for me - she was my grade 7 teacher and it brings tears to my eyes to think that - well - I learned from her and stuff in her life that she's not going to fall without a fight - and I'll never forget her for it and I still keeps in touch with her...and I loves her so much. I loves to sing ...and ..ah...I was always afraid to get up there and sing but she pushed me and pushed me and pushed me to grow, even though I was down cause I didn't want to do it...she got me right back up...you have to keep fighting (B2. p.23).

Gentle Thunder has learned to believe in herself and in her life and to fight against the odds. She has learned this from others who believe in her and share their hope for her with her. Her life is filled with sources of hope. She has learned to fill other people's lives with hope - to become a hope-giver.

> My niece, she's seven, she had surgery last summer on her neck and all down her spine. She **FOUGHT** it! She's all right now but she was so young and she was so strong ..like...I was there with her...like I went to the hospital for two weeks...I took two weeks of my summer holidays and I sat by her every day and I talked with her and did everything but **MY LOVE**... my own love...went through her to help her and that's what, and that's what gets me through things so when I'm sad and down people that got a lot of love in them can help me through. (B1. p.36). And you gotta let some love and hope out too....and I do that to get people through it ...that's why (B3. p.5).

The exchange of strength, love and hope in Gentle Thunder's life are those life-sustaining qualities that move her forward amidst uncertainty and difficulty. The sharing of love becomes the sharing of hope and for Gentle Thunder it is this sharing that gets her through. "Love pulls me through everything - **LOVE** pulls me through everything." (B2.p.16).

Integral to the sharing of love in Gentle Thunder's life is that of "sending love to someone." (B2, p. 16). She tells the story of reading a letter from her ninety-four year old grandmother who had recently passed away.

> Like you read on a letter, with all my love and sending you all my love...you don't know how much those words mean to me....like my nan died in October and I read all of her letters and some said 'sending my love' and every time you read it you felt a little bit happier inside... and just the other day we got her sympathy cards back from the Church and I read it.... and...ah...the end...actually it was really irona...ironic...because it said 'Regardless of where I'm to, I'm always going to be sending you my love.' You could **FEEL** it! ...cause she was sending her love. (B2. p.17).

The love shared between Gentle Thunder and her "nan" surpasses this realm - this world. Gentle Thunder's faith allows her to trust that her nan is still loving her, protecting her, and watching over her. Love finds you wherever you are.

> I had...ah ...ah...a ring on my finger...and she was really old...ninety four...and took it off and I put it in with her. Every time I got sad.. well, I got another ring and everytime I gets sad and I misses her I just kisses the ring and it's a **LOVE RING** and I kisses the **LOVE**...like this...'I love you' and I kisses this ring and I knows that it's in there with her and she's feeling my love right back. (B2. p 37).

Gentle Thunder's stories of hope experiences are filled with love shared in relationship with others, courage that is learned and strength that perseveres. Determination to keep going, to maintain hope and a willingness to keep trying are the strengths she has learned which propel her forward towards the belief that she will be okay in her life and that things can and will get better.

Change: Holding on Firmly While Letting Go

Uncertainty lurks. The time has come in this young woman's life to prepare for moving on from the safety and familiarity of the old red brick school house. I feel her fear. She is afraid. This process of change is difficult for her.

> I don't like change...I'm not a changey person. I got the same long hair since grade kindergarten and I've never cut it. I just don't like change" (B1. p.16), God I **REALLY** don't like the thought of change! It kills me! (B1. p. 32)

There have been so many changes within her town, her province, essentially her whole world. Her experience around change as a young woman of her Newfoundland culture is that change brings the risk of loss and loss is difficult. Most often it is also permanent.

> I sings...my grade seven teacher pushed me and pushed me and she got me up to sing on the Ice Princess Pageant and I won...see I fell down but I got right back up there and that taught me a lesson...now...well, now...she's gone...and **DO YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT?** The day she left...I...I ...stopped singing. I'm **AFRAID**, I'm really afraid but now I'm tryin. (B2. p.8)

She knows that more change in her community will inevitably mean more loss. She is afraid of the loss of the local school, the loss of the town sport of soccer, the loss of the storytelling of old tales, and most painfully the loss of her people as more and more are forced to move away. Perhaps the dreaded fear of all is the loss of this 'Place Called Home.' In her lifetime she has witnessed the deterioration of a culture. "It's so hard to lose what you always had." (B1. p.9)

She understands that the fishery is depleted which means there is no immediate financial opportunity for the province. "The fishery has left". (B2. p. 22). She also knows that for generations of people who survived from living off

the sea, the end of the fishery is the end of survival as it was known for the fishermen of Newfoundland. "Everybody's movin' away. Everybody is gone and gettin' work." (B1. p.24). Yet, somehow in the face of change, she continues to find hope, a hope for the return of the fishery - for a return of the people.

> If the fishery comes back...like a lot of people moved back last year...because the fishery started to come back...now if we can keep our fishery and get strong again...then the soccer hill, will be filled up again too and I knows it will...and that's my hope...but I hope it will come back.

(B1. p.26). This is a little boat, a boat comin' in:

> It deals with the fishery actually because I wants it to stay alive, I'm hopeful that we're gonna hold on to our heritage and our traditions and we're never gonna lose it, I hope that those boats will be alive (B1. p. 32). I hope that the boats are not up on land somewhere (B.2, p.24).

Losing the local school is also of great concern for Gentle Thunder. This change would bring significant loss. She is fearful that the loss of the town's school will cause irreparable damage - the 'death' of the town. "If we lose our school a lot of people are gone out of this place, **let's face it!**" (B2. p.12). She holds on to the hope that this school will survive.

> I hope that in the future to come that this school will still be standing...so much goes against this school...they say it shouldn't be there because it is so small and not enough numbers. They say we might lose our school yet but it's my hope that it'll stay alive." (B1. p.). That school...like.. if I ever had a problem**...there was NO teacher that didn't come up to me and say 'Are you arright?** Would you like me to talk to ya?' (B2. p) My hope is to keep things alive... my hope is that it will all survive (B3. p.5).

This Irish Catholic town has always taken great pride in the sport of soccer. The community as a team plays this sport. There are the athletes themselves that train persistently. "He...my brother...missed soccer practice and he was real tired but he still went running... running in the rain." (B2. p). It is the community's role to cheer for the players on good days and bad. The soccer field, as well as the hill behind it where many townspeople would sit and cheer hold a special place in Gentle Thunder's heart. She has watched the game slip away as have the players.

> The field...ah...it holds a lot for me...my life was...I grew up on that field." (B1. p.18). That's my brother up there on that picture - he was the soccer coach for the 3A soccer champs for three years. All his heart and soul goes into it. When they were playing a game last summer and losing he kept saying 'Show your green colors, show your green colors, this one is for the pride (p. 18).'

Sometime hope is found in pride such as the pride felt by each player and townsperson that cheered for their players on the soccer field shown in the following photo. Sometimes a soccer field can mean far more than a field of grass.

Local soccer field and "the hill" that Gentle Thunder speaks about in her story.

It is difficult for Gentle Thunder to speak about the loss of her town sport and of all of the players that have left to find work elsewhere. In a whispering voice she tells of her sadness.

> If you went to a soccer game now...nobody sits up there on the hill anymore" (B1. p.23). I remember being a kid and always saying, mom when can I get up there? She'd say 'As soon as you get old enough' but if I was up there now I'd be the only one up there. Everyone has moved

away. I just don't want to lose that and I wants it all to come back but **BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW IT'S GOING TO COME BACK!** Is it possible to come back?! (B!. p. 25). I'm so afraid that in a few years it'll be half the bleachers and that's it...it scares me...I **HATES** not having the answer - yeah. I hope it will come back. (B1. p.25)

Resigned to Change: An Angry Paradox

Gentle Thunder's insight alerts her to the reality of times of change that threaten her culture's survival. As a young woman she, nonetheless, refuses to accept that change will destroy everything in her life and the lives of her people. She has, what appears to be a sense of mature resignation to change, despite her fear. About to embark on the journey of life she is not willing to give up. She will meet face to face with change and implement it into her life if it hints at the possibility of a better and brighter future. She will seek a secure future for herself and hope for the same for others.

I wants to think in the future that I'll do well...**I won't lose everything** because Newfoundland is losing everything...I can go and do something else...I don't need the fishery exactly...like probably the fishery is not for me....and I think the fishery is great and I would never hope to lose that because it is such a big part of our heritage (B2, p. 19). Like...if I could go and I could make money like they used to make before in the fishery...I would never turn that down...but I just hopes that there's going to be new things. (B2. p.32)

Signs of complete hopelessness among her people appear to make her angry.

I could do without the fishery.. I don't need it...people thinks that they're not going to get nowhere in life...they'll have to go on welfare - cause the

fishery is going down - then **FIND WORK!** - go somewhere else where you're gonna find work. If I could go with traditions I would, and I don't want to lose that - you can see the way I'm talking and **SHOUTIN' ABOUT IT**, but I'm not going to limit myself basically.....this is my car here... (B2, p. 34).

In a political-like speech Gentle Thunder advocates that change is critical if survival is at risk. She too is torn by loss and saddened by change but she has learned to fight against the odds and if accepting change will provide a more stable future and create promise for the future then she will try it. She is willing to move forward and wishes that for her people but holds this perspective boldly in the grasp of these words: **"BUT WE CAN'T FORGET...."**

DON'T FORGET

Gentle Thunder takes her vow to never forget.

I don't know...little pieces by pieces it's all goin' away and that's the way it feels...so I thinks "little by little it's all goin' away...but **DON'T FORGET** how we sat on this hill and cheered for **OUR BOYS** and **DON'T FORGET** how we were happy when they scored. (B1. p.22)

She worries that she will somehow forget if her life and her 'Place Called Home' changes too much.

I'm gonna hope not to leave. I don't wanna leave. But if I do there's one thing I'm gonna do ...I'm gonna take a book and I'm gonna write in it everything down and I'm gonna remember the people that I remembered and how they had a great part in my life...and I'm also gonna make a statement that a lot of people may not have been close to me but still meant something to me. (B2. p.16). Sometimes I am afraid that I'm going to forget. I don't want to lose all the memories I ever had. (B.3 p. 3).

Gentle Thunder's hope is that other people will remember too.

I don't want people to forget what we've lost in our lifetime...like this is the loss...we've lost great people, bad people cause there's all types of people...there's a girl in this graveyard...she died here in our community at twelve years old and I don't want to forget the times we spent together and laughed together...a graveyard...may be a sign of God or whatever...but **NEVER EVER FORGET...** (B1, p. 15)

Gentle Thunder eagerly reaches for her photos and demonstrates those things that just cannot ever be forgotten. "Remember the worn hands of our ancestors and how hard they worked to give us what we have." (B3, p. 5). The tales told by these fishermen are tales of the culture.

Like you always hear...my uncle...like he's sick now...he's sick and he's always telling stories like when he was younger and all this...like I don't want to forget all this...and all that about the tidal wave and stuff like that...and the ghost stories. (B. 3 p.6).

Gentle Thunder has discovered that others before her, not unlike herself, have advocated to 'Not Forget.' "And you see this concrete wall in this picture... **SEE ALL THE NAMES!!!!**" (B1. p.14)

> Like people who are finished in school...Don't Forget **THEM!**" because they can still hold a great part in your heart even though they're gone...cause...people...do you realize what they're doing? They're writing their names so they won't be forgotten...**THEIR NAMES!!** They're writing it there saying We were here once - now we're gone - **BUT DON'T FORGET ME - JUST DON'T FORGET ME** - like I did great, I did great in my life.

She pledges to never forget, to hold on firmly to her memories although change may rob her culture.

Prosperity To Come

Gentle Thunder is hopeful. Her hope somehow roars like thunder although her aching pain of loss and change whimpers . She remains hopeful for herself, the people of her community, the people of Newfoundland and for all of humanity. The changes occurring in her culture are frustrating for her yet she seems to have found a place of resignation. Nonetheless, heard more loudly than her frustration and her resignation is the relentless song of hope. Gentle Thunder carries the hope that things will return, a hope for prosperity. She has a very specific hope for her Newfoundland community.

> "I hopes for a brighter future here... that the fishplant will be bigger...that that little stretch here ...that'll be bigger.

The local fishplant in Gentle Thunder's community - see arrow.

There will be a bigger fishplant because there will be more fish coming in and they're be more people in it and it'll be more people in the community and we won't lose them." (B1. p.42). There will be more people sitting on the soccer hill and more children in the school...the school and the field will be alive! (B3. p.8)

Gentle Thunder has a message for the people of her town. She doesn't want the fishplant to be taken for granted. She hopes that Newfoundlanders will learn again to appreciate its resources. "And I don't want them to take the fishplant for granted...I wants them to have a **YELLOW, BRIGHT , HOPEFUL FUTURE!...**and for me too." (B1. p.43).

Gentle Thunder also has a specific wish for a return of how "Newfoundlanders used to be." She tells the story of two ships wrecked off the

coast of Newfoundland and how eight men from her town risked their own lives to rescue one hundred and thirty two drowning men. She tells the story of her people with incredible pride.

> They worked so hard and they didn't get any reward....and that was all they needed...but now if that was us we would want something for it, a recommendation...ah...awards or ...ah... plaques and honor medals (B3. p. 13).

She has the hope that what ever happens to her people they will always be the "way they used to be in their hearts." (B3. p.14)

In a world of uncertainty Gentle Thunder hopes for the return of the prosperity of humanity. This would be a humanity that serves others with kindness and equality, a human race that doesn't judge according to the color of one's skin or physical abilities. She hopes for a world without prejudice, judgment and deliberate hurtfulness. "I hopes that some day that through people's eyes every tree is different and every tree is beautiful ...every person is different and every person is beautiful." (B1. p. 43).

Gentle Thunder's photo of a hill behind her school that is filled with different sorts of trees.

Gentle Thunder is hopeful for her own future. "I am hopeful in my life that I am going to have a good life." (B1. p. 44). "I'm hopeful that I'll grow as an individual and when I grows up I'll have other people in my life as nice as one's before." (B1. 4). She is hopeful that life will bring with it all that a young woman beginning on this journey might expect - "A bright, yellow, happy future." (B3. p. 14).

She hopes to hold on to the sense of self that has grown out of her heritage and culture. She hopes to pass it on to others,

to show others how kind and compassionate Newfoundlanders are. (B3.p. 16). I hope to hold unto my faith...the church, cause the church for me is faith and hope actually...cause I don't want to lose the faith...I wants to think in the future, have the faith that I'll do well."(B3. p. 19). I thinks about a bright future ahead of me - not a negative, poor future, bright future for other people too...not only for myself. (B3. p. 21)

Gentle Thunder's hope is found in the traditions of her past, directly influences the experience of her present and encourages her, despite uncertainty, towards her future.

Lonely

"Hope is secretive - She's a gift"

> I noticed her immediately. Her long red hair was pulled back tightly from her lean, fair-skinned face. I couldn't see her eyes at first. She is petite, slight but not frail. She is dressed in blue dresspants and a long-sleeved white blouse with a pink trim - somewhat mature for someone of seventeen years. She kept her head lowered. I wondered and suspected that she was timid. When she lifted her eyes and looked towards me I felt as though they had pierced straight through my flesh landing on my soul. Why...I just don't know. I only know that this made me nervous and aware of myself. There was something magical, if not spiritual in her glance and it reached out to me. Our gaze locked, eventually broken by a smile as she smiled softly and we said hello. I will never forget the moment that I looked into her eyes and she into my soul (Journal Entry - May 9, 2001).

Her Hope is Learned; Her Hope is Shared

Sensing loneliness from another human being, for me, is a saddening experience. But knowing that the same person is not alone makes a difference. She is given the name Lonely in honor of her free ocean pet - her seagull. Her special connection with the seagull is understandable when her life stories unfold.

She sits calmly beside me. Without reservation she chooses her first picture and begins the story of the journey of her hope.

> This is my brother...ah...well...he's not right there in the picture but the picture is all about him! He is my **BEST FRIEND**. I love him and I think

he loves me too...ah...I'm pretty sure. He is everything that I want to be...I want to be just like **HIM** when I'm older. I hope I can be good enough to be like him. This is a picture of a picture that he gave me. It means a whole lot to me...ah...it just gives me **SO** much hope for myself (A1. p.1).

He gives me hope. He never forgets to praise me, and he makes me feel happy and one day he told me... 'You can be whatever you wanna be - the sky is the limit.' I believe that now...well...**HE** said it so it must be true, right?(A1. p.1).

Lonely appreciates the love shared in her relationship with her older brother. It is instrumental to how she perceives her future and the possibilities that await her. Deep inside she sometimes worries about being shy or about not doing things well enough. It is in these times of sadness and worry that she thinks about

him and finds happiness. This happiness gives her hope. She is certain that he believes in her and for Lonely this belief encourages her to believe in herself. She hesitates in silence and then decides to share a few words that she had written in her diary about her brother.

" MY SPECIAL BROTHER"

He is kind and wise
He always remembers me
He can see that I am sad and he always helps
He notices that I am here
He brings joy to our house
He is my brother and I am glad that he is
I am going to be something great all because of him. (A1. p.2).

Lonely's relationships with family members and her best friends are ones that sustain her. Her family has drawn particularly close to survive the pain of the recent loss of its father just one year ago. At age sixteen this was a difficult time for Lonely. Through family support and many long talks with girlfriends who cared deeply about her she has managed to go forward.

"Cancer has an awful smell...did you know that? It has a smell like hospital smell...yuck...it just has the most awful smell... **ROTTEN**" (A1. p.4). Cancer has attacked and won in this family. The effects of its robbery are raw and painful.

> I remember that Dad used to stand at the top of the stairs coughing and coughing and that would go on for a long time...and ...ah... I knew that he was really sick...." (A1. p. 5). Its such a strange feeling when someone has cancer in your house. Everybody else is acting strange...ah...kinda weird... (A1. p.5).

She seems confused as to why and how her Father continued to do some things that he did although he was so sick. She wonders how he found the courage and strength to do them.

> like...he was so sick and everything...but...he...like...did things anyway....One time it was raining outside...and I think it was cold too...I

looked out through the small kitchen window and I saw him out there in the rain...it made me sad. I asked my mother "Why is he out there in the rain? I thinks she said...ah...something like...ah..He's building his fence."

A photo of Lonely's father's fence.

The courage of her father in the face of illness and his perseverance has taught Lonely the power of a hope that fights, a hope for oneself that anything is possible as long as you keep trying. Hope can be found in the building of a wire fence.

Lonely is a hopeful young woman, with personal sources of hope present in her life today. She has found a source of hope in education. Her family encourages attaining a post-secondary education. "My mother is a school teacher and she reminds us often...well... about school and grades and speaking properly." (A1. p.

32). Lonely scores the highest grades in her class. Clearly, the message of her mother's hope for the promise of a successful academic present and future for her daughter has been a direct source of meaningful hope.

" I'd like to talk more about my mother." (A2. p. 4). Lonely's mother is a strong woman. She has weathered the storm of losing her husband and continues with the raising of her children at home. This inspires Lonely to believe in her own strength and to always seek to move forward despite sadness. Lonely worries about her mother. She is aware of her mother's loneliness and tries to help. "I always kiss her. I would never go to bed at night without kissing her. I believe that my kiss gives her my love and that would give her happiness.(A2. p.4). Lonely finds hope in prayer. She prays and trusts that her mother will be OK

> My Mother prays a lot...we all do. We kneel on the floor at about ten o'clock every night and we say the Rosary...I say the fourth one...she prays a lot. I guess she prays for Dad and his soul...although I know that he is in Heaven and all that stuff...I guess she prays for us. **I pray for her**. (A2. p. 12). We believe in God and prayer and...ah...all that kind of stuff like. (A2. p. 13).

She continues to talk about the connection between prayer and hope in her life.

> I pray that Dad is OK and that he doesn't forget me down here and that he can see me, and he knows how well I am doing in school and that I won the Music Pageant this year...I hope that he can see me and see what's happening around here... A2. p. 24).

> Her body huddles inward and her shoulders slouch. Her voice begins to lower and it cracks just a little. She keeps her eyes downward and she holds her hands tightly. Her hands leave their fold and wrap around her upper body, hugging her heart. She hopes and has faith that her Dad is still with her. Her lips shiver and she squeezes her eyes tightly together. Her hand moves into her pocket. She pulls out a religious medal, grasps it tightly, and pauses before she says, "It's my Dad's, I carry it with me. He had it pinned to his night shirt and he prayed to it all the time. I take

> it with me everywhere...like...when I write exams and stuff... Her eyes begin to fill but she somehow finds the strength to create a dam inside of her and the tears are withheld. After a moment she picks up another photo and smiles at it (Journal Entry - May 18, 2001).

Lonely has a theory about how hope travels around the world. She believes that God lends it out like a gift - a "special treasure" to people to help them survive difficult times and find courage and faith in oneself. She explains that when the healing starts and the person is getting well again then the hope travels elsewhere "Well...you still have it...but you have your own hope now...and the actual treasure of hope is needed elsewhere so it follows its heart to the next person. It can **ALWAYS** come back again later." (A3. p. 10).

She tells the story of her special seagull. She has named this seagull Lonely and from that name we decide with a smile that it would be fitting for Lonely to use this name for herself in her storytelling. She was pleased to do that. She felt that it was a right choice.

> This seagull's name is Lonely. Sometimes she is the best friend in the world. She listens to me and I sometimes I think that she lifts my worries away and then they fade...ah.. or... get lost or ...something like that...I am happy to see her and I really believe that it is the same one each time because she flies in the same area, and that's the **TRUTH!** (A3. p. 10). The best thing about Lonely ...this seagull, I mean, is that she knows me...kinda like my brother does...I talk to her...a lot....especially when there's no one else... and she is that treasure that I was talking about...she is the hope treasure. This sounds weird...do you think it's a bit weird...it's my...a secret ... and... hope is secretive...and this is how smart she is...hope...well....she finds you and helps you, and loves you like...ah...my mom does. (A3. p.11). I send messages to my Dad...ah...not only in prayer...but I also talk to him (A2. p). I started to send messages way into

the sky, where he is... through this seagull. It's my secret! I'm sure that they are going to get there now and I'm pretty sure that he knows that I'm OK. (A3. p.11). ... hope is ... like that... it's secretive...and...ah... quiet and no one even knows that it's going on. (A3. p.11).

Lonely's Seagull

Lonely speaks about the touch of hope. A smile from her mother, a hug from her sister, the soft fur of kittens, the wet sand in her fingers and the dry sand that soothingly slips right on through "..that tickles." (A1. p. 18). The warmth of the beauty of nature gives her hope. The magnificence of the world around her despite its hardships remains so strikingly beautiful in her eyes. She appreciates this natural and free beauty of her world.

She is a giver of hope and finds hope in the giving of her time, love and compassion - she shares herself and her kindness with others.

> Giving to others is in here...ah...in my heart I guess...that's what it feels like" (A2. p. 8). I help my brother with his school work because I know that he really hates school - but he's so smart. I try to help him .... (A2. p. 8). I like to help others and...I visit my Aunt A and I pick her wild flowers on my way to her place...she always puts them into a little water glass and perches them in her kitchen window....I like that! She's my mom's sister (A2. p. 8).

Lonely's eyes beam with life when she shares her stories around giving. There remains, however, a loneliness in her eyes that testify to her life experiences. Death has stolen a year of her youth it seems. But she is moving forward and she has plans for success in her future. Nothing helps more than the love of her family, their courage to continue amidst sadness and loss, and the treasure of hope that God sends to help them get through.

Change: Holding On Firmly While Letting Go

Lonely talks about the changes happening in her town, the loss of the fishery and the threat of the school being closed down. She is concerned about the survival of her hometown. "I hope things get better around here - for everybody." (A3. p.13). She anticipates "big changes" in her life when she leaves her town and moves into the city but she is ready to move on.

> I have already been to the university, it's huge...well, compared to our school...but I thought it was nice. My brother took me around. (A2. p.19). I'm not too concerned about getting work in the future and stuff like that because as long as I get good education I can get a good job...that's what my brother and mother said. (A2. 19). Without an education there's...is...ah...not a whole lot of hope...but with one...although you'll have to move away...then you still can do well. There are not many jobs around here anymore. (A3. p 2).

She has a specific concern for some of her friends and if they will survive in a town that does not have much to offer anymore. "I wonder if my friends will be OK - some of them aren't sure what they want to do and they would like to stay home...right here... It's scary I think...what will they all do?" (A3. p. 2). Although economical change doesn't appear to threaten Lonely's plans for her future, she realizes how changes in the economy and the fishery are causing much turmoil for the people of her town.

It is perhaps the separation from her mother and being outside the safety of her home that will cause a potential emotional difficulty for her. Issues of the heart and the pain of death are those she has tried to learn to cope with, often in places of aloneness and silence but still in secret places of safety and hopefulness. Holding these places in her mind and heart will be critical for her. She has learned to lean on her family in times of difficulty and sadness and it has helped her to be there for others too.

> I will REALLY miss being here...in our house...at our beach...I will miss being here...sometimes I just don't wanna go away... sometimes... but... but... I can always come home." (A3. p. 5). I will come home as often as I can and I will stand at the top of the stairs and look through that window at the ocean and I will visit the beach and I will remember all the thoughts and feelings again....I will also look for Lonely.(A3. p. 7).

Remembering

Lonely plans to hold on to the memories of her world. "**I WILL NEVER FORGET HIM... MY DAD...** I will take his holy medal with me wherever I go. She vows to never forget the words of his last Christmas that one of her brother's taped on a microphone saying: **"HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A MERRY NEW YEAR"**

> ... never ... I will think of my Mother every day and ... ah ... I will say a prayer ... I hope that she'll do OK .... and I will call my family and we will talk on the phone ... I hope that's enough ... that it's going to be all right. (A3. p. 8). I'll make sure to visit my friends **EACH** time that I come home and I won't forget... like... ah... the "sliding hill" or the "Mark Rocks" or... ah...It's important to not forget any of this you know..." (A3. p. 9).

Prosperity To Come

Lonely's hope for herself is strong. She has been given the tools of love, support and encouragement from those that love her to assist her in carving out a successful future for herself. Now she will march forward towards the future that is hers to hold. "I am excited to live in the city." (A3. p.8). "I wonder about the new things that I will learn and meeting new people and learning about stuff...my brother says that it is a good university." (A3. p.8).

Although Lonely's world has not been devastated by the loss of the fishery in her province and her community, she expresses her hope for others that have experienced a loss that leaves them paralyzed. Loss is something that she is familiar with and she easily finds compassion for her townspeople. She hopes for the return of the fishery for the people.

> I hope that this little Newfoundland town gets its fishery back...if not...then...the people...well...things are going to be real rough...my mother's town actually relocated when the economy went under...I just hope that other ways of surviving will come and our people here in this town will survive.... (A3. p. 13).

Lonely also has a specific hope for improvement in technology in the future. She wishes for a cure for disease. "I just hope that people that go to the

university and learn about medicine will figure out how to stop it…how to kill it...how to stop it..." (A2.p. 14)

She also wonders when and if people will learn from the mistakes and tragedies of war. She has hope that humanity as a whole will find new answers for dealing with conflict in the future. She has decided that one way of learning this principle would be through an active remembering. She suggests having "Remembrance Day 365 days a year...what if we wore a poppy every day...ah...wouldn't that mean that we remember everyday?" (A2.p.14).

Lonely, in her wisdom and her experience believes in a bright future for herself, her family, her friends and her community. She is strong and she will succeed.

> I am amazed by her insight. She has created an image of hope on seagull wings and this poetic understanding is fascinating. I have enjoyed learning about her. She has captivated me in her soulfulness. She has left me wondering about seventeen year old women, and how little I knew about them until I really began to listen and learn here today. She has lifted my belief in the world. I feel her magic, her honesty and her fight. I believe in her future. I am pleased to have met her. (Personal Reflection, May 19, 2001).

A FRECKLE-FACED ANGEL

> "Like basically...I am trying to **PUT** hope in Mom...for mom, right?"
>
> I have seen many pictures of angels, and I have gazed dreamingly upon paintings of angels at the Sistine Chapel, but I had never seen one with freckles - not until today. She's quiet, a listener and a thinker. She smiles most pleasantly. She has the pure gentleness of an angel. As I read your words I recall your voice, its' initial crackling and eventual calmness. You are here with me again, I feel your presence, and I enjoy the youthful cheerfulness of your freckles. I have become the recorder of your experience and my heart races from time to time as your experiences awaken me. The beating of my heart is not at all a negative one, instead it reminds me of the freckle-faced angel that trusted to share her hope with me. I thank you for that. (Personal Reflection, November 1, 2000).

Her Hope is Learned; Her Hope is Shared

> Her initial glances at her pictures displayed signs of satisfaction with her finished products. She swallowed deeply and said "Ah...they came out nice." (C1. p.1). She sat on a yellow plastic chair, with black legs seated a little distant from the table where she had placed her pictures. She folded herself inward towards her crossed legs, and leaned forward. I invited her to move closer - she did so. She made eye contact only when she lifted her head, looked into my eyes and said "Can I start now? I have specific things to say about specific pictures." (C1. p.1). I smiled at her. We soon began (Journal Entry - May 18th, 2000).

Angel's hope is inspired by, found, nurtured, and given in loving relationships. To receive hope, to give hope, to share hope and to discover hope are experiences of love found throughout her stories. Hope and love are teammates, inseparable in her loving relationships with her family and significant others.

She is a guardian angel - she is her mother's guardian angel. This is quite a responsibility for a young woman of sixteen years, however, she feels it is hers to do. Angel loves her mother deeply and often she becomes the inspiration of strength and courage for her mother whose heart has been stung by the tragic loss of a loved one. Angel has learned that in a world filled with anger, pain, evil and "no where else to turn" loved ones sometimes move on unexpectedly and tragically. Death can sneak up on you and snatch someone you love before you know it. "It hurts...mostly angry really". (C1. p. 16). The loss of Angel's loved one has been a tragedy. "Well, mom, prays a lot...she does a lot because mom's still hurt over it...actually my whole family is." (C1. p. 16). "I just wish... hope that people don't need to be here where they don't need to be" (C1. p.16).

Graveyard in Angel's home community.

If the world could only be a stronger place, "be a better place then maybe this kind of stuff wouldn't happen....like...like...I wish ...I just really wish that. (C1. p.17).

Angel has a very kind hope for troubled people in the world and shows much compassion for their turmoil.

> Well, when I thinks about this ...I hopes that people can work out their problems...that kind of stuff... before they are pushed to the point where they don't feel that they wants to live no more...I hopes that other people don't treat people so bad that they feels it's the only thing to do. (C1. p. 16).

Within the hurt and pain of her loss, Angel continues to find hope. Her lost loved one remains a powerful source of hope for her and has left Angel with a message of hopefulness from which she has learned an important lesson.

> Mostly her...she gives me hope...yeah...like hope that I'll make sure that my life...like...that ... to be stronger...hope that like nothing like that would ever happen and make sure like...hope... that I could try to prevent stuff like that. Like to see when people...when they're not being treated right...to try and talk to 'em and to try and help them.(C1. p. 18).

Angel cares about people. "Sometimes if hope is put into others...then people can work things out and be OK." (C1. P. 20). Angel has managed to find some goodness in the tragic experience of losing someone through an unexpected death and she has learned the value of a hope that cares for others. Her caring hope is exemplified in her commitment to helping her mother through this difficult time following the death of a woman that both she and her mother loved dearly.

> When you're involved in all this kind of stuff you tries to listen to it and talk about it...make mom feel best about it. I explains this stuff to mom. Like basically I am trying to **PUT** hope in mom...it feels awkward too"(C1. p. 19). yeah...mom...mom I'd say gives me hope. (C2. p.8).

Angel watches over her mom and cuddles her mom in words of understanding and love with the hope that her mom will feel better. She is her mom's hope-giver, her mom's love-giver. "We needs to put hope into others," (C1. p.19).

Angel is enthusiastic to talk about her grandmother and proudly refers to her as 'my nan.' "I lives with my nan most of the time, I stays down with her to keep her company." (C2.p. 19). She has an incredible respect for her nan. Her nan has weathered many, many storms and losses. These losses began with the death of her brother in World War II, later the death of her husband, one son that drowned

and another son that died in a car crash. Her nan's religious faith is the source which raises her above the depths of sadness of so much loss of love. This faith is represented in a grotto that Angel's nan has created in her garden.

Angel's Nan's Grotto

Its my nan's...down in front of **my** nan's house...yep...just outside her house...I think it's a symbol of nan's faith because she's like...really religious...the older people are really religious...ah...I think it's just a symbol of...she's after losing a lot of her family and like...ah...that shows that that's her faith. Nan's really...she likes...icons and all that kind of stuff. (C2. 21).

Angel has learned about this faith in God and incorporates it into her own life. Her nan has passed on the power of faith to her. This faith gives Angel the hope that although hurt, pain and tears scar our lives, a faith that loved ones are with God in God's care makes a difference. She believes that love continues in the relationships of even those people that we lose through death. No boundaries shield human love from reaching another and faith in this belief is one that assures Angel that her hope and love is reaching her aunt as does the hope and love of her nan reach those that she has lost. Hope and faith, this spiritual connection has been instrumental in the lives of Angel's family. Angel's relationship with the church is a special one for her.

> This is the hope of the church. (C2. p.6). I just hope that the church...well...will be there...because it's always there to help people...you know...your faith and all that sort of stuff. (C1. P. 20). "I hope that people don't forget about prayer and religion and that sort of stuff because most people they're so caught up in other stuff in their lives that they don't really think that kind of stuff anymore...do they? (C3. p. 4).

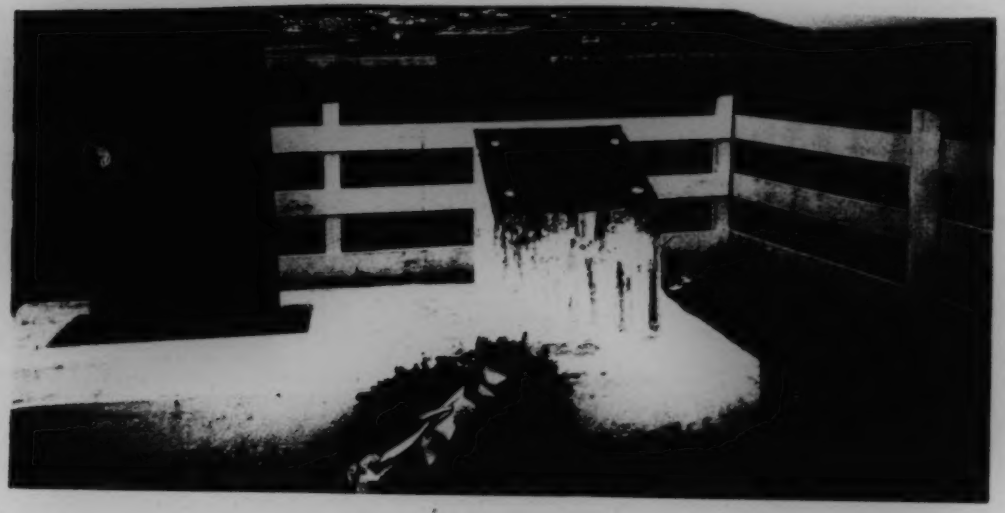
The hopefulness of being able to count upon her faith and the church is important to Angel. This relationship with her church sustains her in times of need. "It's just always there when you need it." (C2. p. 6). She is certain that loved ones never really leave us and that is something that her faith has taught her. She sadly reflects upon the day when her grandmother will pass away but then quickly with a sudden movement towards me uncharacteristic of her posturing, is eager to express in a wide-eyed belief that "the people are never REALLY gone...they're kinda just still around...yeah...they've gotta be somewhere **WATCHING OVER ME."** (C2. p. 9). She trusts deeply in this faith and this sense of spiritual hope comforts her - knowing that those who love her can love her from afar no matter what happens or where they go.

> Her smiles fill the room as she confirms her belief in the transference of love and hope across all boundaries. The quiet, gentle young woman sets free from her lips, eyes, face and body her absolute joy of hope. She holds her head high and she speaks the words of hope and love without reservation. Her body now sits more loosely, relaxed and at ease. She steals the room with her thoughts and her words. It's as though she has finally spoken what needed to be said. I bear witness in awe and complete admiration (Journal Entry - May 18).

Please Remember

In a voice so soft Angel, in her storytelling of her hope experiences, asks gently for people to remember - "to just remember. I think that it is so important to like...remember everything" (C3. p. 2). "Like today...like it seems like everyone forgets everyone so quickly...and I really hope that kind of stuff don't happen to a point where everybody don't remember any of them anymore!" (C2. p.11).

There is a message to her people to remember others.



Angel believes that it is important to remember those that came before us.

"It basically tells me ... that ... uh ... I hopes like people will like ... uh... ah ... always remember other people who have gone before them ... like... remember

how they're still there and the people are not really gone." (C3. p. 8). She insists on remembering who they were, what they were about and how this community was their community too.

> And all these people with so many stories to tell...like all their life...and they looks lost. I feels sad when I sees old people because when you're looking at them ... like most old men ...when they're walkin' down the road... and the fishery...like...all that stuff that used to be common everyday stuff to them is now...like...basically **GONE**. They look **LOST**. We need to remember what they lost. That's why they look lost." (C3. p. 13). "If we forget .... then ... that's just ...ah... not right. I don't want to forget **any of them**!" (C3. p. 9).

Angel is counting on others to remember. She is trusting that in her lifetime she will remember and others to come will continue to do the same. "Even when I'm gone I hope that there's always going to be someone there to remember ...like nothing will be forgotten." (C2. p. 11). In this story remembering, survival, and continuity blend in a fashion that builds ammunition to keep memories and people alive!

Angel's insight and maturity leads her to encourage others to remember the lives versus the deaths of the people of her town. "I hope someday her life...**NOT** the death will be remembered...like her life won't be forgotten. Just because of what happened to her in the end and hope that people will have different views and stuff like that...cause people like says...or are evil...or whatever." (C2. p. 10).

Sometimes Angel is afraid that she might forget to remember. She is fearful that time will pass and she herself might not remember all that needs to be remembered. "I hope I won't forget my nan."(C2. 19). "I hope I won't forget." (C3. p. 10). Despite her fear, she makes a pack with herself to remember- this angel's memories will thrive, stored in her heart and released in her thoughts.

"How could you ever forget someone that has loved you?" (C3. p. 9). Remembering is loving and the love of **her** relationships is filled with hope.

Change: Holding On Firmly While Letting Go.

Change is everywhere in the life of this town, if not taking the life from it. There is a tone of worry in Angel's voice as her words speak her fear for her hometown. Angel's hopeful wish is for a return of the town's fishery but, right now the economy is not very good.(C1. p.1). Change has filled this tiny fishing town with uncertainty and

> no other choice but to leave...most people are leaving...hmmm...most of my family, my dad's family is gone away. Some would probably come back if the fishery came back...uh...but others, I suppose they have got their lives built elsewhere, so it's just as well to stay there. (C1. p. 2).

Angel's story of her future is one that tells of moving forward and taking her home with her tucked neatly and securely in her heart. She is resigned to the fact that her future lies elsewhere but is hopeful that she will always be able to return to this town, this "place to come back to." (C1. p.1).

> If the fishery would only come back, I know that if I ever did want to come back here it wouldn't be resettled...it would still be here...like...most places where the fishery is now...you know...with the problems and stuff like that...most towns have been resettled...so I like to know that if I wanted to come back I could come back here and not worry about nobody being here. (C2. p. 6). I wonder will this this town still be here...I just don't know sometimes (C3. p.3).

Change in this town threatens the town's hope, specifically the hope that has consistently lived in its' school. This has great significance for Angel. She speaks highly of the relationships fostered and remembered throughout her years at

this school. "I hope our school doesn't close...that ...because most of the small schools now...they closes them and puts them into bigger schools." (C2. p. 4).

> This is where the primary students used to go to school one time...and now it's shut down...got closed down and now the little ones go to our school...they were going to turn it into a youth center but they can't turn it into a youth center until pieces are taken out so basically it's just going to nothing up there! (C1. p. 5).

Primary school in Angel's home community.

There is a sense of stolen hope in the closing of this school. It seems that the school gives the town an identity - "Our School." (C1. p.5). Not only does it educate people academically for a brighter and prosperous future, it is keeps the community alive.

Angel holds on to the belief that her school, community and people will survive, but she knows that this task will not be an easy one.

> People have tried. But there's no work here anymore...I don't know...if it came down to a point where there's no work at all...I guess all they could do...the fishery died let's say...then that's all that has kept it here. (C2. p.10). And people who tried...who went out and started their own businesses and tried but if the people moves away then their businesses can't last very long. (C1. p.3). If there's nothing left then....if everything has changed...then...no one will be able to stay. (C3. p. 14).

> There is a blank stare in her eyes, empty and loss. "No one will be able to stay" (C3. p. 14) are words of sorrow. So much has changed in her life. She knows the experience of loss far too well for a person of her age. I too wonder about the fate of her town while feeling self-assured that this woman in front of me will 'find her own way' whatever the fate of her town. (Personal Reflection, May 26, 2000).

She is angry with change. But even angels are allowed to be angry! She points the finger of blame at the culprit of modern technology and accuses it for changing how "things used to be."

Now Versus Then

In her storytelling there is a theme of a 'once upon a time'. There was this place called Newfoundland and its people were its "salt of the earth" (B3. p.8). There were fishermen, whose worn hands toiled the land and sea and women who did all that was left to do at home. These people were generous, sharing, strong believers in the "hope of kindness." (B3. p.8). Good times and bad times were shared by all, there was a sense of "equality" (C3. p. 8). Her story continues about a people that lead a simple life but one that survived in love, giving and respect for fellow man. Then came the days of 'Modern Times' and this New- Found- Land was broken and it changed. This is the segment of the story that cries for the rich

souls of good people that have become tainted by unbeatable challenges and a new chapter swallows up their history.

Angel fears that "all the modern stuff" has replaced the "old stuff" of her ancestors (C3. p. 9). It's as though Small Town Compassion has been beaten by Big City Technology. Yet, amidst her protest, Angel, in a voice stirred by wishful thinking reflects a positive in this "new stuff." (C3. p. 10).

> Someday with new developments and everything people with diseases and cancer and that stuff won't be here at this graveyard so early...so many young people won't be dying form all kinds of diseases and that kind of stuff...and Aids and cancer and the miner's disease - my grandfather's got it. (C3. p. 10). I just hope...ah...that young people are not here when they don't need to be. (C1. p.16).

She realizes that this is not a battle between the now versus then. It is the process of change, it is not easy but it is also not impossible.

Angel, in her heart will never move far from her traditions, but she herself will likely travel far and wide from this town and hope to embrace a future brighter than the present. This woman seems to be creating space for opportunity and wishes the same for her people.

An Angry Angel Speaks

Somehow it is as though this sixteen year old woman has become a guardian angel for her community, if not for all of humanity. She has chosen the job of speaking critical messages to her people with the desire of leading them toward a change that will not only help the people to survive but also hopefully save the souls of humanity.

> I imagine Angel on a dark stage. There is only one dim light, it's the light at the podium and she begins to approach it. Nervous fingers rattle the one sheet of paper that she has armed herself with. Her face isn't visible...only a light shines on her mouth and it is from here that the litany proceeds. This is a speech to her people and to humanity. I imagine this purest of angels transforming before my eyes. The gentleness remains but she needs to be

heard and sometimes a soft voice doesn't reach far enough, deep enough or penetrate enough. She has come here to share her hopes for her town and for all towns everywhere.. "I have hope that people will learn." (C1.p.9) Angel's hopes are strong and they will not give up. (Personal Reflection, June 5, 2000).

DEAR PEOPLE OF MY TOWN AND OF MY WORLD:

I have hope for all of us but **OUR** world has become a sad place. We have destroyed our earth - "oil spills...ah...destroys our environment...there's pollution in our ocean ." (C1. p.3) and we have destroyed our fishery, "if they keeps on catchin' that - the crab, then they will destroy that too... just like the cod." (C1. p.3). When are we going to learn? "I hope that we don't take things for granted anymore...even the water" (C1.p. 10). "When will we learn?" (C3. p.9). We have taken our beautiful planet for granted, we shout feelings of hatred towards people because they are different, we have motivated inequality, we are wasting our hearts, our souls, our kindness. We are pitiful. and we are **LOST**.

As the voice continues to deliver, nothing is seen other than the lips of an Angel. She has come here to say farewell because it is her time in her life to move on but not without saying what this valedictorian needs to say. This speech disciplines her audience. She grabs on to her rightful ownership to give this speech as she announces: "This is my town too" (C3. p.1). Angel is hopeful that messages for a return of the compassion of years gone by, integrity, peace in people's hearts, appreciation for things, the joy of remembering, loving, caring and learning will prevail.

Clearly resonating throughout her speech is the need for her people to hold unto the principles of ancestors but forge on towards a future that will be unfamiliar but not impossible. It's as though she gives permission to hold on yet march forward, to trust in themselves again. She hopes for the survival of her people, a survival of the land and the sea, and most significantly a survival of kind hearts filled with caring hope and a human understanding that prides itself on the condemnation of the judgment of others. In a return to her angelic softness Angel invites her people to choose human kindness and understanding, to believe in her future and to believe in their own. (Personal Reflection, August, 18, 2000).

A Prosperity to Come.

Angel's address to her listeners seeks to instill the belief of a prosperity to come. Although she reverberates her disappointment in the world, Angel has not at all abandoned her hopes for its' restoration. Essentially she has a hope for a brighter future for all people, a hope for an understanding of love that embraces equality, sharing, giving and forgiveness. She has a specific hope for her people.

"I really hope that things will get better...that the fishery will re-flourish and people will get jobs back" (C1. P.2) "Angel has a hope for peace in the world, "I hope for bright colors...like...happiness...hope that there's going to be peace and all that kind of stuff." (C2. p 21). "I hope for all good things for others." (C2. p. 21). "

Angel's photos of her bright colors of hope.

I have hope for me...for myself. (C3. p 4). I am young...ah...and I have...ah...my life ahead of me...I hope that it is a happy one...and I hope that I can get a good job...and come home too...sometimes.(C3. p.11). I hope that my family will be OK and that jobs become more plentiful...new jobs....or even the...ah...old ones (C1. p.2). I think a lot of people miss the fishing...ah...my father works at ... at a fish plant...but ...I think people misses it...I hope it comes back for them. (C3. p.13).

This hope-giver, this valedictorian, this woman named Angel is the future of her people. She will make them proud.

EYES OF BLUE FIRE

"I won't stop fighting - do you **hear** me?!!"

> With a style of your own, your black raven curls and your beaming eyes of blue, I catch myself staring at you and thinking to myself what a beautiful young lady you are. I notice that you are relaxed and comfortable. I experience your ease in your posture, your smile, your interaction with your friends and the way you walk towards me while telling me that your father thinks that he might know one of my older brothers. I am fond of you instantly. I admire your self-comfort and how you speak and walk with ease. I am eager to learn about you (Journal Entry - May 9, 2000).

The name Fire fits her well. In her eyes there glows a blue fire of unmistakable determination. Her eyes are sparkling blue, blue diamonds that shine in the most remarkable dance. These dancing eyes lead you to her soul. She is a fighter, a survivor, a learner and a giver. She fights for her town and its survival, she has weathered personal storms, she has learned from significant people in her life and she gives of herself to others. Her experiences of hope are delivered in the passion of her fiery words. Hers are words of a fighter - full of fire, gust and a strength found amidst experiences of pain.

She is also incredibly gentle, and there is a warmth which radiates from her testifying to the kind heart which rests at the core of her being. She is respectful of people, of the earth, of her God and God's world. Her life story unfolds as one that is grounded in various shades of family. Family has been her salvation. Her openness allows her story to flow freely and authentically. There is so much to tell.

Her Hope is Learned; Her Hope is Shared

With utter enthusiasm Fire shares her stories about her community and her school. Her eagerness dances in her sparkling eyes as she begins to unfold the meaningful experience of having grown up here in this little Newfoundland outport and having been helped and blessed by the people that care about her. In her stories it becomes clear that her family, school and community are all joyfully held under an umbrella of various shades of one big family. When she talks about family she

is referring to her parents and grandparents, her teachers, her school, supportive community members and the church. She is grateful for all of it. "This year I've had a rough year this year... and...ah...like...I had the whole community around me this year...thank God...because...ah...ah... it was a really bad year" (D1. p. 15). It was her family that helped her through.

Fire has survived difficult experiences throughout her lifetime. But she is a fighter! She has learned to fight against the odds and her fight against difficulties has been possible because of the love found in her 'community of family'. She is noticeably tearful as she speaks the following words..."Like...when I was asked to do this project...you would wanna see the pride that beamed in my head...cause like...like that's just the way it is with me, right? (D1. p. 20). She is proud of her community and welcomes this opportunity to honor it. Her community has given her hope throughout her life and for that she is tearfully appreciative.

> She tries to hold back her tears but they sneak through and gently slide down her pale face. "I feels like crying, she whispers" (May 11, 2001). In this moment I experience the heart of a real survivor, a person who has fought painful battles and has made it through. I am overwhelmed by her emotional honesty and touched by the depth of her kindness and vulnerability. To be welcomed into the world of such genuineness is surely a rare gift. She swallows, then smiles at me. I smile back and we transfer our understanding unto one another. The silence in our smiles is beautiful, if not magical (Journal Entry - May 11, 2000).

Fire is aware that her community is at risk for survival. She has witnessed so many people moving away but she remains hopeful that she will be able to stay. She wonders about the future of her community, about her future.

> It's really sad to know that everybody's moving cause...our...well...I'm hoping that our community won't become a ghost town. (D2. p. 3). I just really, really hope that the fishery will open again...cause...like... it's really important for the community cause our community really survives...ah...on it (D1. p.2). But ye know...this town...this little outport town means everything to me" (D1. p. 3). I don't want to leave

> here no matter what...cause if this town starts boomin again I'll be like...ah...like so happy...I won't have to move away to Toronto or anything like that (D2. p. 5). I grew up here hoping that I could stay here for the rest of my life (D1. p. 8).

There is a fear growing in this small outport town. In other towns before this one, one of the signs of the definite deterioration of the town was the closing of the local school. Fire's community is now faced with this possibility. She is fearful, as are others in her community that the local school will be closed. In her school she has found much hope.

> The love in this school is unbelievable, you could never get it anywhere else...it's ah...like...ah... one big group - no - one big family. And ye know what...yer not gettin rid of it...of that... it's burstin at the seams, that's what sir says, the pride and community of this school is burstin at the seams.(D1. p. 10).

Fire in her determined voice represents the determination of her people in many ways. She explains the hopeful fight of her community to keep 'our school alive!' "We're after fightin really hard to keep our school here. They're after tryin real hard to take it from us a few times...but ah...they haven't won" (D1. p 11). By 'they' Fire is referring to the district school board and their attempts to amalgamate local schools into larger centers. Fire speaks honestly and truthfully when she explains...

> "I don't care WHAT happens in the future, as long as my family is here, my school is here and my community is here. That's my biggest hope for my future" (D1. p. 10). "I just hope that they will all stay here for good....ah... FOREVER!!! Do ye hear that? I wants them here - I'll **FIGHT!!** We're after fightin before and we'll all fight again! (D1. p. 11).

Fire hangs on firmly to the hope and belief that her community will survive. Of all the co-researchers it is Fire that appears most committed to staying here in her hometown..."no matter what!" But she is afraid. She is scared.

> If the school goes, the community will go...and all of my dreams...like...ah...we're so close...we're just like a family, the school is so much part of the community and the community is so much part of the school. This school...ah...gives me hope, all of my hopes and dreams were made and are really in this school...I've got so much encouragement here and this school and the people in it gives me my hope (D1. p. 8).

In a heartfelt swallow she gathers her breath and says, "If I can walk across that stage at graduation...ah...wearing our colors, knowing that you did it and you got everybody behind ya...gives ye hope for your future...I can believe in me (D2. p. 6).

The love, support and encouragement shown towards this nineteen year old senior has made all the difference in her life. In the caring actions of her school teachers she has received hope and has learned about hope She is especially proud to talk specifically about two school teachers that have been significant sources of hope.

> I tinks a alot of these teachers...like...these teachers... if they got mad at me...I'd sit down and ball my eyes out...and ye know...these are just two of the many that I tinks the world of...it's just that these two have given me the real PUSH. They have shown me what hope is (D1. p. 16).

Each of the two teachers holds a very special place within Fire's heart. In her sweetness and genuine style she talks about these two very important people. Fire becomes silently emotional as she speaks.

> ...and that time in my life I was at...a really bad day...a really bad time...in my life. He was the only one I thought would look at me and tell me that I

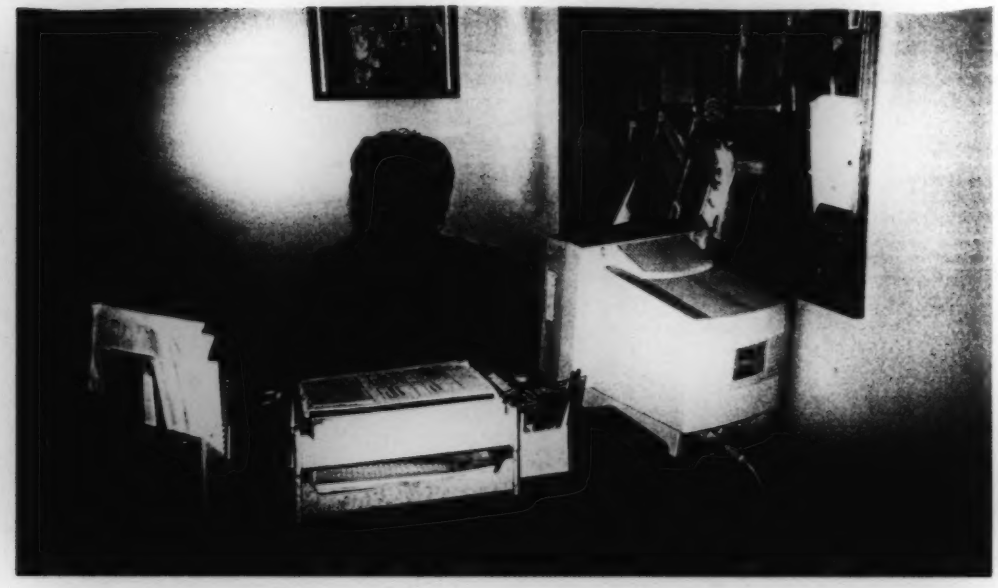
could do whatever I want to do if I put my mind to it...and he...he just looked at me...and it wasn't really what he said but how he helped me and how he didn't give up on me...he just gives you a boost...

Mr. L - Fire's special teacher.

I love him just like a father...he has given me hope and has helped me to take that hope and express it to others...he taught me and he told me that I believed in myself then I could do anything...and that's where my hope comes from (D1. p. 12). Mr. L is just like a daddy to me...ah...he has given me so much hope and ah...love and...ah... inspiration (D2. p. 5). In a most gentle and appreciative voice Fire shared how this teacher "give me my

hope when I was down" (D2. p.7). Fire talked about a second teacher, Mrs. S.

She ... she... has given me a lot of hope too...cause...at this point...I was this close...I was really close...but like I don't know what I would have done (D1. p. 15). She looked at me and she said: Just think about next year when you graduate, you're OUR hope for the future - whatever you do - Don't give up on me now! She really gave me that little boost - just like he did that time...ah...I got so much love for her...she's like a mudder - a MOM to me...and she means the world to me and like...ah...she gives me hope too (D1. p. 15).



Mrs. S - Fire's special teacher.

Fire has also found hope in the words of her own father. She remembers how he told her about the importance of looking for a "sunbeam of hope." She has never forgotten these words. From her family and community she also learned the hope of religion, hope in prayer and belief in God.

> Even if you don't have a person...like physically there to hold unto...you always got someone in God...like mentally and emotionally there to hold onto to...you'll always have...like...someone to tell your hopes and dreams to. God is always there (D1. p. 20). When times are tough...ah...I always make myself sit down and I made myself turn back to Him...I made myself just sit down and pray to Him...and that gives me hope that I can be able to do this whenever I needs to do it...cause when you got hope in God you got hope in your life" (D1. p. 22). Prayer gives me alot of hope (D2. p.4).

Change: Holding On Firmly And Not Letting Go

What lies ahead for this young woman and her community? She is afraid of her home becoming another ghost town but she has hope that it will survive. Despite difficult times and hardships Fire will not lose her burning flame of hope for her people.

"There is this little song that comes on a commercial on television and...ah...it goes like this: One little candle, let shine...and...ah...if everybody lit one little candle what a bright world this world would be, peaceful" (D1. p. 26). Fire has lit her own little candle and she keeps it burning in hopefulness for better times ahead, a return of prosperity and the survival of her community.

Although Fire does speak about leaving home she does so infrequently. One might conclude that this Newfoundland daughter will not wander too far from her people.

I loves...like... if I went away from the sea too long...I'd be drawn back...I'd have to come back cause it's no good...like...all of this is BEAUTIFUL to me...poetic in many ways...ah...peaceful...like the waves hitting the sand...ah...the ocean...she can take a man's life and she can give a man his life... (D1. p. 30)... you see ... ah ...the ocean is in my blood, and I'm not goin' anywhere (D2, p. 8).

Fire's Ocean

Fire, unlike her fellow co-researchers, appears to have made a firmer decision to stay here in her community. Life will nonetheless change for her as she will leave the role of adolescent and develop into a mature adult, but is seems likely that she will experience her life changes right here at home. She knows what staying means. Here in her Newfoundland community she will continue to honor

her people and her community, she will undoubtedly participate in the fight for its survival. In many ways Fire is holding out, it seems, for a return of prosperity.

> I really really hope that the fishery comes back because that's a lot of hope for everybody in this community (D1. p. 3). I'm really, really much hoping that our fishery will rebuild. that our stocks will rebuild, that ...ah...the fishery could open again...ah...this town has been everything for me (D2. p. 4).

> I imagine Fire standing eight feet tall leading a group of feisty, committed community members in a parade which represents the soul of a determined community. Her eyes are proudly gleaming as she says with a voice of courage "We will never stop our fight - DO YOU HEAR ME?" (Personal Reflection, May 19, 2000).

Fire's Vow To Remember

Much like her fellow co-researchers Fire too takes her personal vow to remember her traditions, loved ones, heritage and to forever honor her memories. In many ways Fire's apparent decision to remain here on this Atlantic shore testifies to her vow. To remember is to stay here and to continue in the traditions of her ancestors. It is likely that she will continue to live in her culture right here where it all began for her.

> Ah...ye know...I am fearful that if I ever...and I mean **IF**...I had to go away some time that some of it...my memories would get lost...but then again...there are far too memories here in this community for me to forget...but we'll get through, we'll survive... (D1. p. 35). I'm going to stay here...ah...ye know my parents never let me out of their sight (D2. p.10).

Fire is loyal. In her words and actions she demands a respect for the traditions of her community. She demands that never will the community's soccer field and fishing boats be forgotten! In a sudden gust of volume she shouts

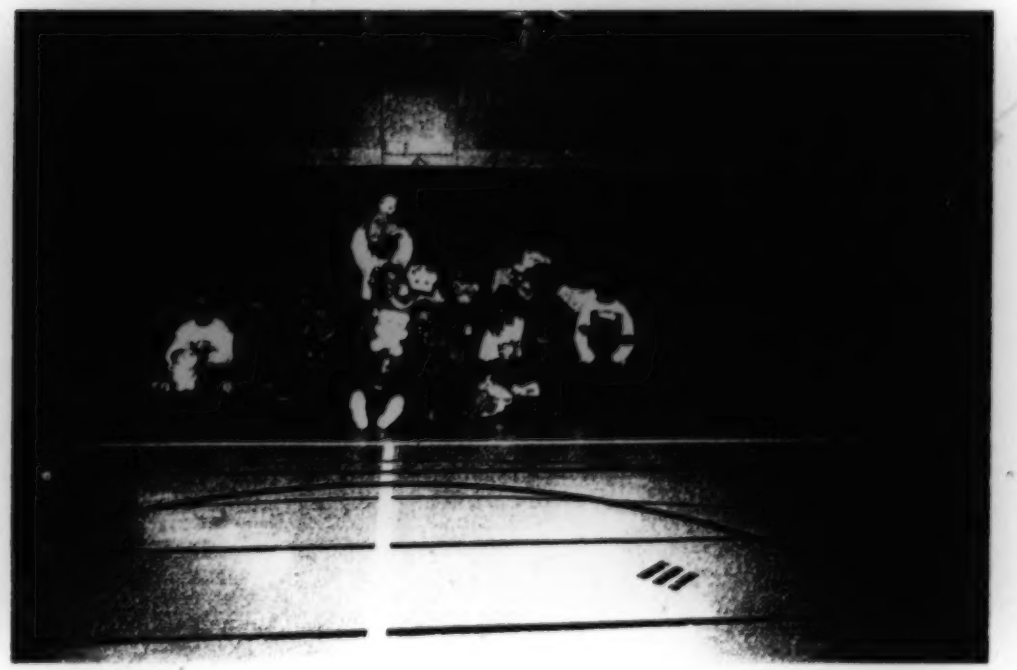
"Remember OUR BOYS and the poor man's sport - our soccer"(D1. p. 33). She will never FORGET. She is too grateful to forget.

Prosperity To Come

Fire smiles towards her future. She has survived painful life experiences and knows the pull and strain of finding hope among sorrow. She smiles towards her future perhaps because she knows where it is that her future will lie - most likely here at home. Although prosperity is far from plentiful in this little outport town she continues to hope for the best. She will take on the fight and she and her people will FIGHT until their battle is done. "We are strong people around here, did you know that?" (D2. p. 9).

She will pass on her torch of hopefulness to others as she watches another generation grow from childhood into maturity.

> Like...ah...they're all beautiful children in this kindergarten photo...and...ah..I'll watch...I'll really watch them grow up...like...ah...people has watched me grow up - and I really hope that their life will be as good and peaceful as mine. They are our hope for the future (D1. p. 28).



Fire's Kindergarten Children

"Perhaps I will be able to give someone what my teachers give to me - that's what I hope - and children need that ye know...ah...yeah...everyone needs that..." (D2. p. 5).

Invisible

"I'm not sure when I started writing in my diary but I'm glad that I did.

All of my hopes and dreams are in this diary...yep...."

I feel that there is a sadness around you. You seem to keep your head lowered in shyness. I wait for a chance to look into your eyes and when the chance shows itself I catch you only for a second. Your full figure is wrapped in a loose T-shirt and jeans. You cuddle your body inward. Amidst your timid presence I am certain of a powerful courage. I send my energy towards you as I watch your gentle and subtle movements. Already I feel that we have met - connected. Although you hardly spoke a word when we first met, I heard you speak plenty... (Journal Entry -May 9, 2001).

Her Hope is Learned; Her Hope is Shared

In her world she counts on the love of others to give her hope. She has learned that the kindness of loved ones can carry you and lift you above hurt and pain to a place of safety.

I love my mom a lot...and...ah...I love my grandma too. They are so strong. They love me. I hopes...I hope...that my mom and grandma move away to the city with me next year. My grandma is getting old now...I hope that she doesn't get sick or anything... (E1. p. 8). I write about them in my diary...ah...I always remember things that they tell me and I write them down so that I won't forget them anytime (E1. p.9). I always feel good when I talk to grandma (E1. p. 9). When I'm sad...like..you know...if someone calls me mean names...I can always tell mom and grandma. They help me to feel better and to not be afraid...ah...they give me love (E1. p. 10). One time grandma told me that when I grow up and move away...ah...maybe to university or something like that...then I will meet new people and...ah...stuff like that...she knows about lots of stuff...grandma...(E1. p. 11).

In a world often filled with nasty insults and mean jokes regarding her body, Invisible turns to her family and finds hopeful words and actions of encouragement. In her diary, a hopeful book of writings, she holds her precious memories of love. Sometimes her diary is the only place where she does not have to feel invisible. Her diary doesn't record her body size as do so many hurtful people. In real life it seems feeling invisible helps but not in the world of her diary. Her diary is a safe place. It is a place of hope.

Invisible's special place at the beach where she often writes in her diary.

> Sometimes I go to the beach...and...ah...I have a special place where I sit...kind of hiding away...and...ah...I take my diary with me. It's nice on the beach...and...like...no one is around...and ...like...I just sit there and write (E1. p. 13). I also take my book 'up on the hill'...like...that's a

spot near the jumping rocks and I write there too (E1. p. 13). I write all kinds of things...letters to mom and grandma, poems and things I think about...like...ah...when I move away and grow up... (E1. p. 14).

Invisible's diary gives her a place to go in solitude and quiet. Hopeful wishes for her future find themselves written on the special pages of her diary. She hesitates to read from her diary, but then begins. She looks downward and her right foot shakes as she begins...

April 2, 2000 - Dear Diary, today I felt so sad when J called me those names. It hurts when people pick on me and I wish that they wouldn't. Mom says that sometimes people are mean and I know they are. I feel sad but I know that things will get better. God is watching out for me and mom and grandma....I hope that when I move away I will be happier....

Diary entries also write about her hopes for her future, her dreams of becoming.

June, 2000 - Dear Diary, I want to be a social worker when I leave school. I want to help sad people. Mom and grandma says that it's a good job for me."

With the support and love of important people in her life Invisible will leave her sense of hidden presence and march forward towards her becoming.

My school guidance counsellor tells me that I can get a scholarship because of my good grades...I have the highest grades in my class...well...there's one guy that almost beats me but I usually get first place...she...likes me(E1. p. 15). Mr. L. is nice too. He always says hi to me (E1. p. 15). I am going to do good at school when I leave and I will help other people, kind of like the guidance counsellor (E1. p. 15). Invisible's goal is essentially to become a hope-giver and this is reflected in her career plans for her future.

She knows the value of receiving hope and she will gently pass it on to others.

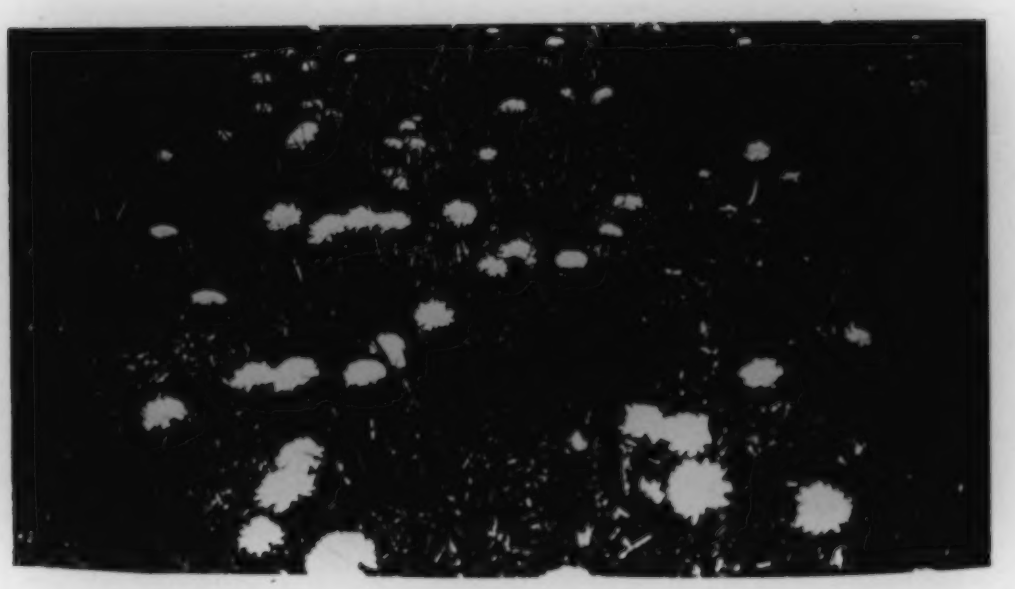
The Catholic church is also a source of hope.

"Sometimes, like...when...you're alone or really feeling bad ... then ... like ... ah ... like you can always talk to God ... that's what grandma says...she does it lots. I ask God questions and I pray a lot...and a little short prayer helps me feel better!" (E1. p. 16).

Her faith, and especially prayer gives her hope. Feeling better and going forward are the signs of hopefulness found in her prayer and faith. She often speaks 'The Lord's Prayer.'

Invisible also finds hope in the change of seasons.

I love it when spring starts...and...ah...the ground is soggy...and then the grass gets green...it's pretty...and...ah...you see new baby horses and cows and little ducks...that's pretty...it's like...the new beginning...but like...in the fall it's nice too...and...ah...in the winter here...sometimes the harbour freezes in some spots and I think that's pretty...**ALL** of the seasons are pretty and new...grandma always says that it's good that everything changes and grows...I think so too (E2. p. 6). I write about the seasons in my diary...and it makes me happy...like when I see bumble bee flowers I feel happy inside and I write about it in my diary...and like...bumble bee flowers are big and small, tall and short...but they all look bright and yellow, don't they? Yellow and **FULL OF HOPE**! (E2. p.7).



Invisible's bright bumble bee flowers of hope.

Despite physical criticisms that leave painful emotional scars, Invisible has been able to seek out places of hopefulness and embrace the hope- filled support of loved ones. She is incredibly courageous as she plans towards a future that is filled with wishes and hopes for better experiences. It seems that she is unstoppable in her quest.

Change: Holding On Firmly While Letting Go

Although Invisible is eager to move forward and create a life elsewhere she makes those plans not without fear. Life ahead of her will be different from how she lives it now. She will leave the safety of her mother and grandma, and this will be difficult for her. She is afraid of the unknowns of the life and world ahead of her. In a sense she battles between the pain of leaving her mom and grandma behind and the need to move on so as to find a better place for herself, as a young woman, in the world. In her life as in the life of any young woman a degree of uncertainty is found.

> I hope that everything works out all right...I hope that I get ahead...but...I'll really miss mom and grandma...I'll have to come home pretty often...yep...I'll come home to see them... (E2. p. 10). I don't think that I'll mind change too much but I'll miss mom and I'll miss grandma...and I'll have to find somewhere else to write...you know...like the beach or up on the hill...yep... (E2. p. 10). As long as I can come home then it shouldn't be too bad... (E2. p. 11).

Invisible is also firmly aware of the turmoil of the people of her town and expresses a concern for those who live in her community. She knows that this community, her hometown, is struggling. She has an uncle who used to be a fisherman and now he has to travel to Toronto to work for most of the year. "It's sad that Uncle P has to go away so much just to find work...I hope someday the fishery comes back so that he can be home with his family...he really likes it here" (E2. p. 14). She remains hopeful that others like her Uncle P will be able to survive here in this little town and the fishery will "come back like it used to be" (E2, p. 15). "Sometimes I pray for the fish to come back so that people can be happier" (E2. p. 18).

She also expresses her concern regarding the potential closure of her school.

> Like...I think our school is a really good one...like I get really good grades and the teachers are really nice to you too...especially if...like other people aren't nice...so I hope that the school doesn't get closed down...the teachers are really nice (E2. p. 24). But you know...ah...whatever happens...mom and grandma tells me that I should go to the university and get a 'good education' so that I can have a good future...but I hope the fishery comes back for other people...the older people...like.. (E2. p. 28).

A Diary **NEVER** Forgets...

She makes a personal promise that no matter where she goes she will always remember the important people and things of her life.

> I'm going to take my diary to St. John's and I will keep it in a safe place and read it alot and I will never forget to think about and write about mom and grandma...they...well...I loves them alot... (E2. p. 31) Although I will be miles away, I will still think about them...like...even if something ever happened to grandma...cause...like she's getting old...well...I can still write in my diary and like...talk to her..and remember things...they have given me so much...(E2. p. 32). In a sad voice Invisible honors all that her mom and grandma has meant to her. Mom says for me 'to make them proud' and that's what I am going to do...cause I think I can... (E2. p. 35)

Invisible clutches unto the sheets she has taken from her diary and in her clutch there is the strength of a conviction of not ever forgetting the love of her mom and grandma. "I will always love them" (E2. p. 35). Although life changes await her, she will not forget their love.

Prosperity To Come

Invisible is hopeful that her future will be prosperous. For a long time she has written these hopes, wishes and dreams on the pages of her diary. She is also hopeful for a return of prosperity in her hometown, a happier life for people there and 'better times ahead.' "I hope that things get better here for the people" (E2. p. 36). Also embedded in her hopes for future prosperity is the hope for human kindness. "I just wish that people could be kinder...and like not such make-funs...like...why do people want to hurt other people...it's sad" (E3. p.3).

> I remember when we studied about the Pollux and The Truxton in Newfoundland Culture (two foreign ships that sank off the Grand Banks). Ye know I wish that people could be like that again...like...my grandma says... in the 'old days' people seemed kinder...helping drowning men from their sinking ships and today...I don't know...I **HOPE** they would be as kind but sometimes it's hard to tell (E2. p. 38). I hope that someday people will learn and stop being so mean...I just hope (E2. p. 39).

She will go forward and she will take her diary of hopes and dreams with her. Stronger than any insult have been the words and gestures of encouragement, love and hopefulness that have been given unconditionally from loved ones. Indeed she will go forward and she will touch the lives of others with love as her life has been touched by love. She, in her personal commitment, will contribute to the world and bring to it a place of kindness and understanding - all of which she has often written about. I believe that she will begin each season with fresh beginnings, smile upon the beauty of bumble-bee flowers and will make her mom grandma, and herself very proud.

CHAPTER FIVE

AN INTEGRATION OF THE INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

Chapter Five integrates the interpretations of the findings with the discussions relevant to the research findings. It seemed appropriate to integrate these two sections so as to illustrate the immediate and direct support of the research findings found in the literary sources of the discussions section.

A phenomenological understanding offered by van Manen's Researching Lived Experience (1990), proved to be applicable and significantly insightful to the reflective style utilized in this research study, as well as to the interpretation of the research findings. For this reason the chapter begins with a specific focus on this literary resource. The chapter then proceeds with an interpretation of each theme, including direct quotations from the co-researchers, followed by a subsequent discussion relative to the research finding. The discussions provide literary sources to support the data. One source of literary support, included in this chapter, is found in a return to the culture of the co-researchers, specifically highlighting the music of this distinctive Newfoundland culture. This music sings the tune and rhythm of further literary support for the research findings of this investigation. Later in the chapter I will offer a general overview of the findings, as well as this research study's contribution to the hope literature.

van Manen (1990), provided a significantly useful phenomenological guide throughout this research investigation. Indeed there are no universally accepted rules or format in phenomenology but, as a research method, van Manen's understanding of phenomenology instructed and reminded me of the ethics and approach to follow in conducting this research study. The following section is an

elaboration of van Manen's themes of the "Four Human Existentials" (p. 101) while previewing the interpretations of the findings of this research study.

van Manen's "Four Human Existentials"

"Regardless of their historical, cultural, or social situated- ness," there are perhaps four existential themes "which probably pervade the lifeworlds of all human beings" (van Manen, 1990, p. 101). As a qualitative researcher I found the four existentials of "lived space, lived body, lived time and lived human relations" (van Manen, p. 101) to be particularly applicable throughout this research study.

Lived space refers to spatiality and is described as human "felt space" (van Manen, 1990, p. 102). This concept is further elaborated as the lived and living space of one feeling "at home," described as "the world or landscape in which human beings move and find themselves at home" (van Manen, 1990, p. 102). In this research study, the inquiry into the experience of hope was in essence an inquiry into a place called home - a space which offered the familiarity and support of home. As the first theme that emerged from this research, hope was found, amidst the ebb and flow of uncertainty, like an ocean filled with life.

Lived body refers to corporeality and is described as "bodily presence" (van Manen, 1990, p. 103). The joyfulness of youth was expressed in the stories of the co-researchers of this study and lived body was experienced in the 'splash of freedom in their ocean'. However, as the life stories grew, they revealed a sense of corporeality which was perhaps more tense, anxious and uncertain. Nonetheless, as adolescent corporeality grew towards adulthood, hope was expressed in the lived body - a calming and confidence which challenged anxiety and uncertainty. In this research study the psychological movement and development of the co-researchers were demonstrated in the lived body. Van Manen's human existential of "lived body" offers support for the co-researchers' struggle for a place of home amidst the threats to human existence and to one's hope.

Lived time is described as being "subjective time" (van Manen, 1990, p. 104) and is found in a person's "lived history" (van Manen, 1990, p. 104). Lived time constitutes one's temporal journey in life, the past, the present and the future that draws one forward in anticipation yet fearfulness. The lived past of the co-researchers of this study has undoubtedly shaped their present and will influence movement towards an anticipated future. These maturing adolescents are coming of age and are preparing to set sail on an open sea of potentialities. They know that change is happening, and with this change although it may seem that life is losing its identity, it is in fact growing towards itself in the fulfillment of identity. The experience of the felt movement of change of one's past revealed in the stories of the co-researchers finds support in van Manen's assertion that "the past changes under the pressures and influences of the present...the past changes itself, because we live toward a future which we already see taking shape, or the shape of which we suspect as a yet secret mystery of experiences that lie in store for us" (1990, p. 104).

In the case of the co-researchers of this study, they not only knew the change of tides in their lives, these young women knew the tides well. They saw a future taking shape and they watched until they knew in which direction they would take themselves. As identity reveals its temporal nature, so too has the hope of the co-researchers. In this sense van Manen's theory of lived time gave way to the second theme that emerged in this study connecting hope and identity.

Lived other is described as "the lived relation in the interpersonal space that we share with them" (van Manen, 1990, p. 104). Hope and love have been shared faithfully throughout the lives of the co-researchers of this study. The interpersonal space of their relationships has taught them to believe in their selves and to move forward, especially in times of hardship and low confidence. All of the co-researchers in this study have experienced the hopefulness and critical nature of

living relationally. Lives, hopes, dreams and kindness have been shared, learned, and cherished. van Manen's human existential of 'lived other' is found everywhere in the lives of the co-researchers.

An Integration of the Interpretations and Discussions of the Findings

Both the preliminary and secondary literature reviews undertaken in this study confirmed that throughout the years of hope research, much has been written around the themes and definitions of hope, the constructs of hope and the evolution in the understanding of the hope phenomena. This research study has found specific support in the hope literature dedicated to the nature of relational hope, dialectical hope, hope and love and a temporal hope (i.e. a past lived hope, a present living hope and a future referenced hope). Each shall be addressed in this chapter.

Finding a Poetic Style in the Deliverance of the Themes

Themes which typify the hope experience for the co-researchers of this study are highlighted in this chapter. These co-researchers are the 'core-searchers' and 'core-knowers' of the experience of hope from which the emergence of themes began to form a pattern. In honor of the women that made this research project possible, I have decided that, as I approach the elaboration of the research themes, I shall refer to the young women of this investigation as my 'core-searchers' from this point and on. Why? It is from their personal stories of hope that this research writes and delivers its core. In many ways we have searched for the core of their hope experiences and created the themes together.

The themes are the threads of the hope experience which formed the theoretical basis for the metaphor of the imaginative teller of the hoping process. I have selected the metaphor of the ocean for two reasons: 1) I, as well as the core-searchers have grown up by the ocean; it has been a part of my life and the lives of

the core-searchers for all of time, and 2) the ocean parallels the power and possibilities, the magnitude and magnificence of hope!

The Metaphor

Metaphor implies a poetic style of the use of language, whereby something is given the attribution of a name or quality which does not represent a literal application. (i.e. 'nerves of steel'). This study incorporated the use of the metaphor of an ocean, therefore the experience of hope was thematically described in the language of the 'things' and attributes of the ocean.

In this research study, the metaphor of the ocean illuminated the depths of hermeneutic insight and gave life to the themes that emerged. The energy of the ocean's language guided the descriptions of the hope phenomenon towards a meaningful expression. The image of the ocean as metaphor, in its poetic style, took the research "beyond the content of the metaphor toward the original region where language speaks through silence." (van Manen, 1990, p. 49).

Just as people think in metaphorical terms, it is important to also write in the same way because the "path of the metaphor is the speaking of thinking, of poetizing." (van Manen, 1990, p.49). In this poetizing style, phenomenological writing has been described as "an incantive, evocative speaking, a primal telling wherein we aim to involve the voice in an original singing of the world." (Merleau-Ponty, 1973, p. 135). To sing the song of hope in a poetic metaphor then, is to give the words of hope-related language a freedom to drift and find a place of beautiful expression. It is the powerful, bold nature of the metaphor that demands one to listen, while gently uncovering its' significant silence in a poetic design.

> By the bold and running use of metaphor, the poet will amplify and give us not the thing itself, but the reverberation and reflection which, taken into his mind, the thing has made; close enough to the original to illustrate it,

> remote enough to heighten, enlarge, and make splendid. (Woolf, 1932, p. 32).

In this research project, the core-searchers' photos have been perceived as speaking specifically to the hope experience, and the metaphor as speaking to the themes of hope. Throughout this research activity, threads of the hope experience were captured in visual imagery and revealed in the human senses of sight, smell, hearing and touch beckoning the use of the metaphor to give expression to the findings.

By integrating hope literature with the words and photos of the core-researchers a unique blending of the individual with the universal became possible. My personal reflection entitled 'The Maritimer' captured this personal ocean of an individual maritimer with the universal ocean that connects all maritimers and charted the experience of hoping.

The Maritimer

> I am filled with a sense of vacancy as I sit here overlooking the 'harbour' - our own small piece of the Atlantic Ocean. I remember this town and I have forgotten this town all in the same breath. This vacancy continues to gnaw at my heart and I soon realize that something is missing here - there are no seagulls left - no echoes of the fishermen's music. Where have all our seagulls gone? This ocean this massive Atlantic is null of fish and of its seagulls. No fish to fill the ocean and no birds left to sing about it. I remember when they clucked like hens, swarming around the wharves and boats, delightfully honking their horns of the victorious catch - no more - not now at least. (Personal Reflection, May 10th, 2000, 5:10 p.m.)

A seagull is a maritimer. She is connected with and lives off the ocean. She is the bird of the sea. She is familiar with the ocean storms, the fishermen, those that wait at home for the fishermen, sunrises and sunsets. She has eavesdropped on the ocean diaries of fishermen who experience the unspoken stories of courage, tears, cold hands, lost souls, lost dreams and times of boat camaraderie and competition. She also sits on the wooden posts of barb-wired fences while women hang clothes to dance in the wind scented by the salt of the ocean, listening for thoughts of concern, joy, dreams made, lost and revived. She intrudes on the

playground of the children, the beach. She teases children, pretending to be catchable and flying away just in the moment when a child feels she has moved closer to this wild ocean pet. Sometimes she perches pensively, in a stillness on her favorite rock. This ocean bird has witnessed the history and the life of the maritimer.

Maritimers and the ocean are knowers of one another in the rarest form of friendship. It is a friendship of promise yet fear, of threat yet opportunity. There is an addiction to their sea. Maritimers are wholeheartedly attached and loyal to all that the sea is because "there is no way to stay away from it." (A Fisherman, May 12, 2000). One might wonder if out there on the open ocean perhaps dreams are dreamed "without the mountains or hills creating obstacles" (The Perfect Storm - Universal Pictures).

A maritmer is tied to the ocean, tied to the life experiences of the ocean, never truly wandering too far from that special place. In a reflective instant a maritimer can smell, feel and gaze upon the ocean. In a memory, the gusts of growling winds, temperamental ocean sprays and angry ocean waves climb unto the land and that coastal perfume of salt water is unmistakable. Fondly familiar are the intrusive stormy-day salt water pellets carried on the accompanying winds that shoot the pellets wherever they deem themselves to land.

The ocean is **home** for a maritimer. If we think of the ocean as the space and place where a maritimer's life unfolds then we understand more clearly how the ocean is not just a vast body of salt water, but more accurately, it is the vastness of life. In the context of this study, the ocean is the host of life's experiences, losses, victories, love and survival. Dreams are born, life celebrates and life struggles, all here on this ocean.

In the context of this study we need to remember that by the fury of an ocean filled with a way of life, both home and hope are often tested. In fact, for

maritimers, storms become a way of life. Storms on the sea, in the sky, on the land, in families, in the loss of fishermen and in the threat of the loss of continuity of a culture test life and, thereby, test hope. Not surprisingly, maritimers are used to weathering the storms, picking up the pieces and rolling forward, proud to border the sea and live on its' shores. To be a maritimer is to live the way of the ocean, to smell it, to taste it, to play in it, to remember it, to miss it when you move on, and to always have the hope that it will be there whenever you return.

The Phenomenological Themes

It is within the context of "The Maritimer" that this research is reported. Feeling near the ocean, smelling its' salted aroma and feeling its' cool ocean spray is a backdrop to experiencing and understanding the themes about the experiences of my core-searchers.

"Phenomenological themes may be understood as the structures of the experience" (van Manen, 1990, p. 79), and must not be misunderstood as being generalizations. Themes are "more like knots in the webs of our experiences around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through meaningful wholes" (van Manen, 1990, p. 90).

Keeping in mind that multiple meanings may be mined and illuminated in any investigation and that "different readers might discern different fundamental meaning" (van Manen, 1990, p.94), the rigor and commitment that lead me towards the expression of my fundamental interpretation of the text was verified by the core-searchers in this study.

The findings are represented as three themes found in the hope experience of the five core-searchers of this investigation. 1) Hope is an ocean filled with life; 2) Hope is my identity, and 3) Hope is an anchor of purest love. Each theme warrants an individual dedication, while the blending of all three is inevitable. The

following section will begin by addressing the three themes descriptively and individually, through the metaphor of the ocean.

Themes Of Hope Illustrated By The Metaphor Of The Ocean

Hope is an Ocean Filled With Life...

The lives of the young women of the maritime story of this research study are inevitably tied to their ocean. In turn, this faithful bond to their ocean lives is interwoven with their flow of hope. In the context of this study, hope seems to have been born out of life by the ocean and life has been nourished by hope. In this sense, hope and life are inseparable.

Imagine the core-searchers of this study as the maturing adolescent dolphins of their ocean - the older adolescents of the dolphin pool. Years of life's youthful hopefulness have given them a freedom to dip and dive, splash and spray all in the safety of the deep blue sea of home. Families and protectors have nourished a hopefulness for them and the ocean of life's future experiences will challenge this hopefulness as they mature. Despite the carefree whistling of their songs of gleefulness and their childlike fondness of games, their bright eyes of adolescence have not been spared life's temper. Although secure in the safety and warmth of their familiar piece of the ocean, these maturing dolphins are not unaware of the tempests beyond it. The unknown is fear-provoking.

Now teetering on the developmental edge of adulthood, these dolphins are witnessing the challenge of change and transformation. Will their hope survive in this ocean? Will this ocean enhance their sense of life? Is hope essential to their successful survival? Will one survive without the other? Will leaving their home as they know it mean leaving behind their hope of home as they know it?

As these dolphins swim towards new and unknowable waters, if they dare to roam they will be tested. Hope will travel with them. The dangers of life's ocean may be filled with fishing nets and sharks, but this hope is oriented to the promise of the deep blue waters yet to be experienced.

When Adolescence and Hope are Swimming in an Ocean of Paradoxes.

For the young women in this research, their adolescent experiences have remained faithful to a reputation of confusion and personal difficulty. The swell of upheaval has lifted its intimidating head and the effects of uncertainty and fear have challenged the comfort and stability of their familiar calmer waters of childhood. Life is being torn as it sways in an unsettling tide amidst the ebb and flow of dichotomy. The waves of difficult choice toss hope against uncertainty, to and fro in its' constant momentum.

But amidst the challenges to their hope and their future, these young women are realistic. They know their fate if they stay and they are aware of the possibilities before them if they should move away. Hope will not abandon their decision-making. Life will trust hope and hope will trust life as the answers to adolescence are recognized and chosen.

Swimming in an ocean of life's paradoxes, these young women at times reach a secure surface and other times get carried aimlessly by the current. In this ebb and flow, however, not one of the young women spoke about being left fully adrift. The tides of their ocean lives are well known. Life with their ocean has taught them the comfort of knowing when the tide is in and when it is out. They just know. Hope allows them to just know.

To those who know, the tide is to be both respected and feared. The pull away from home brings with it the fear of leaving hope behind. Taunted by the tormenting giggles and threats of fearfulness and uncertainty, the questions around leaving this ocean loom in darkness and thoughts become paralyzed in fear.

I'm afraid! I'm terrified! I knows that I have to go but I'm afraid! (B2, p.15)

I hope that I will do well. I know that my brother will want me to do well...ah...I hope so (A3, p. 8).

I suppose you can always come back...it's scary though...talking about leaving...I'm not even sure where I'd go yet (C3, p.6).

People leaves and some of them comes back...I don't plan on leaving and I don't want to leave, but I might have to...I don't tink I will though...it's so safe here and everybody knows everybody (D2, p 16).

I have enjoyed growing up here...I'll miss this school...but I am definitely moving away and going to the university. It'll be different...I'll have to study a whole lot more, I hope...ah...it should be ok...I can always come back and see my mom and my nan (E2, p. 10).

While their hope holds tightly to a familiar existence, they are uncertain about what will happen when they move to unfamiliar waters. The young women of this study struggle between hope and fear. They wonder if connections to significant people, traditions and to themselves will be lost somewhere in the future beyond this familiar place. They are saddened as they imagine their loss and wonder about what they will gain.

Caught between a sense of loyalty and the guilt of betrayal, decisions are not easy to make. In accepting a future, nourished and paved by those who have loved them, these young women wonder if in leaving all of them - the parents, grandparents, teachers and church behind, they will end up adrift and abandoned.

Sometimes I really feels bad...like...let's say I go off to wherever...and I gets a good job...ah...but like mom and dad still have to work so hard down there at the fishplant...and like...ah... have you ever seen the hands of a fisherman, or how tired he looks at night? (B1, p. 26).

> I just hopes that mom will be OK...like...ye know in the future when I am gone. She is a good mom...and...like I have always tried to be there for her...and put hope into her...but I hopes that she will be all right when I moves away...if ...ah, I has to go. (C2, p. 33).
>
> My future lies ahead of me and I suppose it's only right that I take it (A2, p. 22).
>
> I'm going to stay right here and that way I can keep an eye on the people and the community that I loves so much (D1. p. 12).
>
> I don't know what I would have done without my mom and my grandma and my writing. I will always remember that...I will make them proud of me (E2. p. 31).

Life's dilemma to remain here in a familiar place, or to set sail independently brings with it a blowing gale of paradoxes. The personal fight to keep traditions alive are thrown against the possibility of resignation and moving on towards a brighter future, as well as the creation of other traditions. Personal vows to always remember are somehow challenged, if not tormented by the fear of forgetting these precious memories. The sacred foundations of Catholic roots are now in preparation for a communion with the secular and this is awkwardly unfamiliar.

This experience of adolescent life vacillates between fears and readiness, decisiveness and the threat of uncertainty, as well as the safety of community against the curious availability of individuality. The then and the now of life are becoming divided. The ocean of life is unsettled...

Found in this torment of the acceptance versus the refusal, and the staying versus the going, is the calming breath of hope. "I just hope...I mean...you got te have the hope that its' all going to be arright...(Gentle Thunder during a telephone conversation - August, 2000). Hope is that lived space between the back and forth,

the then and the now, the soulful and the sad, the loyalty and the betrayal. Hope is found in the space between the ebb and flow of life's personal tides.

Although the tides pull in two directions, hope is found in that space in between. This hope is patient, it gives time to review dilemmas, and it is courageous instilling the strength to accept the changes of life's ocean and to move onward towards the rest of life elsewhere- or the strength to stay and live life in a familiar world .

Hope is a reminder of promise. Hope secures the belief that life as it has been known is properly stored in the memories of life's heart. Although these young women are afraid, hope doesn't let them walk alone. It travels with them, through the torment and the difficulty. This hope is home, it is the space and place of familiarity, comfort and safety. Afraid but also curious, life can trust that hope stands close by. In an unknowable but inevitable place of personal drizzle, hope is the lighthouse on life's ocean. The young women of this study will continue to be tugged and pulled towards that light.

Hope will always be in that space called home, no matter how far these maritime women travel or how close they stay. What we need to understand about these maritime women is that their hope will <u>always</u> pull them towards being maritimers - towards home, no matter where they sail.

<u>Discussions of Theme #1: Hope is an ocean filled with life.</u>

A significant amount of hope literature has confirmed the dialectical, dynamic nature of the hoping process ((French, 1952; Pruyser, 1963; Marcel, 1962; Menninger, 1959). Pruyser (1963), described that hope is dynamic because "the forces of despairing co-determine the dynamics of hoping" (p. 59) and that hope is dialectical because an "experience of hoping presupposes the experiences of doubting, fearing and despairing" (p. 92).

In this research study the core-searchers have been depicted as experiencing hope amidst the ebb and flow of the life tides of uncertainty. Found between the anxiety and resignation, the refusal and the acceptance, the decision and the uncertainty was the space of hope. Between these waves of paradoxical questions and answers lived hope.

As the core-searchers talked about being torn between opposites, debating whether to stay or go, survive or sink, become an individual or stay in the safety of community, hope was a dialectical experience. But, as Keen (2000), has stated, "the dynamic of hope is the inherent process that resolves this conflict" (p. 18)

Other support for the observation that life is filled with ebb and flow, dichotomies and contrasts has been found. Jevne (1994), for example has said "Hope is the space between" (p. 10). Buckley (1977), has argued that an acceptance of the paradoxes of life nourishes one's hope, and trusting in the process of hope while struggling through its dialectical nature becomes a source of hopefulness. Farran, Herth, and Popovich (1995), have also described the experiential process of hope as being the dialectical relationship between hope and hopelessness. From their perspective to know winter one must also know summer, to know hope one must also know hopelessness.

Keen (2000), wrote that "the dialectics of the seasons was nature's explicit testimonial to hope" (p. 18). Buckley (1977) concurred stating that "the season of Spring directly speaks the language of earthly hope" (p. 339). The core-searchers of this study used nature and Spring to represent their experience of hope. For instance several of the core-searchers yearned for Spring, to experience new life and to witness the re-birth of the world around them. Sources of hope were found for the core-searchers in the 'bumble-bee flower' of Springtime, the scent of 'soggy ground' as snow melted and the frozen ground thawed, the return of daffodils in a 'mother's garden', the birth of ducklings and the return of chirping

birds. In the cyclical nature of all of the earth's seasons the core-searchers found hope. Perhaps the cyclical nature of the seasons could be understood as the core-searchers understanding of the movement of and the inevitable changes of life.

Just as Marcel (1962) and Pruyser (1963) objected to the notion that hope is solely related to the attainment of a specific object, the findings of this study suggest that hope is more fittingly related to "ontic" states of freedom, peace, joy and deliverance (Keen, 2000). No matter what each season held, beauty or tempest, the core-searchers in this study were willing to go forward, with the hope that the newness of each season would be promising. With the change of each season they sought joy and freedom as the spring growth of each blade of grass reminded them of their hopefulness.

Hope is My Identity

Maritimers enjoy the artfulness of engraving, if not profoundly sculpting with the pointed edge of a piece of aging driftwood, their complete names in the largest of letters on the wet sand at the seashore... Although these letters make a literal mark 'on the world', it takes only the instant wash of a white seashore breaker and the letters vanish!

In this study, where identity is challenged by the changes of adolescent life as the core-searchers moved toward adulthood, the thought of one's name and identity being swept out to sea was a fear that was quite real. In each of their lives the transformations of identity were not clearly understood or always welcome. The white seashore breakers of life were indeed at times threatening.

In the context of this study identity and one's hope formed a most important relationship. The turbulence experienced by the study's core-searchers arose out of their finding themselves in a world where the ocean is dying, the fish are leaving and no one knows if or when they will return. On one hand they might fear that identity and hope will be erased in the wash of life's waves. On the other

hand, they also know their life on the ocean is where their personal history, identity and hope have been and are unfolding. Their life's ocean holds the history of their past, flows in the present and offers a passage towards a future. The ocean of a maritime life both writes and erodes the scripts of the past. In doing so the ocean, their identity and their hope are one. How? Because the past, the present and the future constitute the temporal nature of life, identity and hope.

Found in this research study are the shared and reflected stories of hope lived in the experiences and relationships of the past, a living hope identified in the unfolding of becoming and a future hope for a life of promise. The experiences of life are those which have formed the foundations and expansions of hope and identity.

Hope, an ocean vessel of personal promise, friendship and reliability has poured itself into each core-searcher's being. The voices of this research study narrate identities which have been born out of a history that has found hope amidst countless hardships. And where and how is this hope found in a history of apparent cultural uncertainty? Perhaps it is in the paradoxical nature of where certainty and uncertainty co-exist.

Perhaps each core-searcher in this study has wondered if she has met the fragility of her hope and identity face to face in this tempest on her ocean of life. Despite the fear that the ocean of life is becoming a threatening tidal wave, each young woman knows that her very survival depends upon her listening to the heart of hope as it speaks to her and hanging on to her identity. How can she hang on? She does so when she hears the heart of hope speak, exorcising the fear that threatens her identity.

Life's ocean is not washing away or stealing identity and hope. The experiences of life turbulence are not a tragic story of being lost at sea, but a

hopeful process of rolling towards maturity and towards life. The growth of life travels towards maturity and the tide of life demands it.

Changes in time and place in the ocean of life will not erase hope or identity. With her history of being and the hope that has been given in that history, and exists in the present each core-searcher is moving towards her future, but free to return for a refreshing dip, dive and splash in the ocean of her past. Her identity is her own. It is the story of her life experiences. No turbulence, growth or tidal wave can erase it.

As each core-searcher grows towards adulthood, how will she poise herself? She will do so hand and hand with hope. Her identity and her hope are in a most beautiful consonance, harmonizing intrinsically. What one must understand about her is that her hope and her identity are developmentally one, 'growing up' together. Amidst the hardship and challenge on the ocean of life, each one has been nurtured, and is now ready to move with the next wave their life's ocean brings.

Discussions of Theme #2: Hope is my identity

Identity and hope share a temporal component as each grows out of the seeds of the past, develops into the present and influences the nature of the future. Where identity is found in one's past, present and anticipated future, hope is lived, is living and will live in one's future. (Marcel, 1942). The hope experiences of the core-searchers of this study were gathered through recollections of the past, examination of the present and reflections of the future. Marcel (1942), was the first to suggest that hope has the ability to transcend time. An interesting parallel occurs with the notion that one's identity transcends time as well.

Jevne (1990), has observed that hope "appears to be referenced in the future, grounded in the past and experienced in the present" (p. 30). The temporal nature of hope, in companionship with the transcendence of time searches "for certainty and ... for continuity" (Keen, 1994, p. 106). Mishel (1988), in turn has

argued that the search for certainty is found in learning to live with the uncertainty of one's situation.

In the turbulent age of maturing adolescence, teetering on the edge of adulthood, amidst uncertainty of the world that awaits, the adolescents of this research study find hope in the acknowledgment and acceptance of uncertainty. They do not have the answers to life's questions but they have learned to accept uncertainty through a hopeful acceptance which allows for calm, promise, possibility and peace.

The temporal nature of hope also speaks to the core-searchers' search for continuity. Continuity was sought when the each core-searcher transcended the present by grounding herself in the support and love of the past, while projecting herself into the future. Each one did so with hope that exorcised fears and created a brighter sunrise for the tomorrow yet to come. Each core-searcher's past lived hope and present living hope was monumental to her hopeful future.

Hope is an Anchor of Purest Love.

Each core-searcher of this research study has loved and has been loved. Many times and again, each of their lives has been touched by the gentle warm breeze of loving kindness. Nestled in an ocean home of unconditional love, each one finds hope as an anchor in her life. To each core-searcher hope is love.

Relationships of purity, freedom from restrictions, boundaries, and conditions, intimate passages and arrivals with others fill each core-searcher's ocean of life with the hopefulness of warm currents and sunlit surface! Such relationships have provided shores of safety in this place that will always be called home. Here with family, friends and community grounded in a Catholic faith which instills a caring for and sharing with others, hope has been learned and it has lived.

As she travels unto other oceans, each core-searcher of this study is groomed with the memories, words, songs, smiles and hugs of love which have been mysteriously written into the soul of her being. They will forever dance there in delight. No turbulence or distance can ever separate her from her heart of memories. There is no storm capable of moving this anchor, no wave able to erode it . These are the promises of hope and love.

What has hope taught these core-searchers on the ocean of life? Hope guarantees that in just one second each core-searcher can return in thought to the years of dolphin-hood and visit the starfish of the ocean floor, colorful and light - almost weightless and free, or can feel the coolness of an ocean dip and the rocking massage of free drifting on the open waters. Hopefulness will return with memories of the small schools of caplin fish that gleefully chased her or of the aging, wise cod, that swam calmly past her, touching against her, sharing knowledge, belief and faith in her while gazing lovingly into her heart and soul. The richness of each core-researcher's hope has helped each one learn about hope and how to share it. To each core-searcher in this study, the deep ocean blue has given her space to hope, to roam, to discover and to grow. While life has not been without its' storms, it has also never been without the love and hope.

Without conscious awareness or deliberate thought, hope and love have established solid connections of a lifetime. It just happens that way. Hope and love have stored the precious cargo of human connection in the safest place of the vessel, in the heart, illuminated by the soul. Worries are silenced in the presence of loving hopefulness. With this knowledge each core-searcher finds her sigh of relief.

And how will each core-searcher hold on to her relationships of gold? Hope will secure them in each sunrise and tuck them safely away with each sunset. With the new beginning of each day she will live the unconscious reminders of the love

and hope of her caring relationships. The breath of life will remind her. And with each sunset she will find herself in the depths of reflection and experience the comfort of reconnection in the core of her being - her soul. She will smile gratefully whether she does so miles away on a different sea, or right there in the same place where pivotal connections began and grew out of hope and love.

For each core-searcher the beginnings of her hope were nourished in each kiss, touch, or word of love given by others a long time ago. From there each hope droplet grew into an ocean. What we need to know about her is that nothing is more present, alive and influential than the two intangibles of hope and love. Chapter Four testifies to the soulfulness of these young women and their need to receive, give and share hope and love. Nothing is more important to each core-searcher on her ocean of life than the anchors of hope and love because hope and love ground her to all that matters.

Discussions of Theme #3: Hope is an anchor of purest love.

The experiences of hope for the core-searchers of this study were grounded in love. The importance of loving relationships, being 'pushed' to keep trying by those that believe in you and the sharing of love were instrumental. Being connected to others in a sense of trusting communion gave the core-searchers hope, especially during difficult times. This form of hope is an interpersonal hope, hope experienced relationally. Hope, a "primitive reassurance" was born and grew in their interpersonal relationships (Marcel cited in Keen, 2000, p. 19). Hope found in relationship with others instilled the courage and faith to go forward, unstopped by the ambiguous experiences of the past.

Despite the painful experiences of the core-searchers throughout life's journeys, through "one little ray of hope in a world of darkness" they moved forward in hopefulness (Pruyser, 1963, p. 94). Hope was learned, shared, received and given in loving relationships.

Farran, Herth and Popovich (1995), have referred to the relational process of hope as the "heart of hope" (p. 6). The heart of hope is filled with the love and expectations of significant interpersonal relationships. In this research study the core-searchers were proud and grateful to talk about those who loved them and believed in them, pushed them to grow when they themselves lacked the confidence to do so. Through death, loss, poverty and loneliness, it was the love of mothers, grandmothers, teachers, community and a faith in God that shared a hope that could transform sadness and pain into a safety and comfort. The relational aspects of love and hope have been pivotal in the lives of the core-searchers of this study. Love between self and others brought with it the joy of hope.

More About the Literature

As a researcher I sought to explore all of the literature on hope. As an individual I felt drawn towards intentionally selecting my personal choice of readings. Some of the literature touched my personal place of hope, whereas other literature left me feeling disappointed. As I continued to read more and more of the hope literature I noticed the unmistakable emphasis on hope and the evaluation of goals and whether the goals could be met. Perhaps my disappointment grew out of the emptiness that this emphasis created for me because of my rich experience with my own study of hope. It was the heart of hope that I had learned so deeply about in this study because the lives of the core-searchers of this study were filled with that kind of hope.

Reading all of the literature was a critical task to undertake in order to achieve a thorough understanding of the early views of hope which saw hope as a unidimensional construct and defined it as an individual's expectancy of goal attainment (Frank, 1968; French, 1952; Gottschalk, 1974; Stotland, 1969; Snyder et al., 1991). Hope theories have since been expanded upon.

While hope and goal attainment may be related, to restrict hope to being "the sum of the mental willpower and waypower that you have for your goals" (Snyder, 1994, p. 5), would largely undermine the stories told by the core-searchers in this study. Ignoring the positive global affect of hope such as happiness and contentment (Snyder et al., 1991) would dismiss their joy as well. Specific goals for their future were not absent but truly paled in comparison to their hearts of hope and the richness and depth of their soulful hopefulness instilled by others, learned and shared. These pieces of hopefulness radiated from each of them.

Various schools of hope have influenced the lives of these core-searchers. Through a Catholic upbringing influenced by a Christian hope which embraces

good human acts or charity, the core-searchers honored a spiritual hope (Farran, Herth & Popovich, 1990), which Marcel (1962), has described as the I-Thou relationship in the ultimate experience of communion between the Creator and created. Spiritual hope was reflected in the core-searchers' stories about being committed to sharing oneself with others, and teaching the world about being a more caring, understandable and charitable place. Marcel (1942), suggested that charitable works are enactments of hoping. This altruistic nature of the core-searchers in this study was evidenced in their hopes for a brighter future for others as well as for themselves.

Default and Martocchi's (1985) multidimensional, comprehensive Model of Hope, focuses on thoughts, feelings and behaviors to the experience of hope. The elements of hope in this model include a sense of trust, a sense of personal meaningfulness, a realistic assessment, and a responsiveness to an innate life force (Default and Martocchio, 1985). Each of these hope themes were explicitly reflected in the stories of the core-searchers in this study. The findings are further supported by Nekolaichuk (1990) who, in an exploratory descriptive study, described the process of hoping as one of maintaining the hoping self and coping, or learning to live with uncertainty.

The hope of the core-searchers in this study is further supported by Lynch (1974) who believed that hope is the very heart and center of a human being. In the sacred place of the soul of their being, the core-searchers felt what Lynch (1974) described as "a sense of the possible" (p. 32).

> In a final reflection on the secondary hope literature review I sit back and in a silent head nodding I now feel that I have grown to understand hope from many different perspectives, all that I have been willing to learn about but not necessarily adopt. There is one point of which I <u>know</u> that I am certain and I am compelled to mention, which is... Surely hope cannot be the "worst of evils", prolonging "the torment of man" (Nietzche in Menninger, 1959, p. 451) as early Greek views would have us believe. Why then would she have so gently reached into human souls, touched them and led them towards a personal rescue? (Personal Reflection, May, 4, 2001)

ONE HOPEFUL CULTURE

This final piece of Chapter Five moves away from the use of the metaphor of the ocean and introduces the character of Newfoundland's music to the reader. In fact, nothing says more about the way of life of rural Newfoundlanders than the authentic lyrics of their songs, the mournful voice of the accordion instrument and the roar of tap dancing feet. When seeking other sources to complement the stories of the Newfoundland daughters in this research, there is no better place to visit than the music of their people. Through songs, the history and traditions, as well as the faith and hopes of 'many a Newfoundlander' are shared.

The aim of this chapter has been to support and integrate the research findings from this study with other literary sources. This goal would not be complete if I failed to harmonize the lyrics of Newfoundland ballads with the words of my core-searchers. The following might be understood as musical words of hope.

Musical Words of Hope

Lyrics for "UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN"

Well, here's to you wherever you may be
I tip my hat to your health and your well-being
And may the sun shine down on you
And know that you're my friend
And I **hope** it won't be long
Until we meet again

chorus
Until we meet again my trusted friend - Aunt Annie
I just wanna tell you how good that it has been
And there's a place in my heart and it's always there for you and I
Hope it won't be long until we meet again

Well, I must be on my way on the next train out of town
But I'll be comin back just to see you my old friend
I'll be thinkin of you and all the good times that we had

And 'May The Good Lord Watch Over You' until we meet again

(By Gordon M. Edwards, age 34. Winner of Canadian National Music Award. This song has been chosen by numerous high school graduating classes of Newfoundland as the theme song for graduation).

An Interpretation of the Lyrics

It seems that this song is about relationships and connection to loved ones whom are often thought about and remembered. Although people may travel in different directions in a lifetime, the connection of love is never abandoned. The lyrics of this song also make visible the expectations that although many of us must leave we expect and hope to stay in the hearts and memories of those who stay and those who go.

Lyrics for "THE TINY RED LIGHT"

"I'll place the **light** in the window my darling, she said,
as she gazed at the dark stormy night over head,
the little maid ran with eager delight
and placed in the window the tiny red **light**

Early next mornin' came a knock on the door,
he was angry and cross cause his fish were not sold,
three tiny ships went adrift in the gale
and the look in his eyes said it wasn't a tale

Many were lost on the billows last night
that might have been saved by the tiny red **light**
Many were lost on the billows last night
when you took from your window the tiny red **light**

(By: Semini, a musical group that consists of two brothers. Semini has written and produced multiple albums based upon Newfoundland culture and is specifically known for the song "The Mummers' Song" - a Christmas favorite)

An Interpretation of the Previous Lyrics

This fisherman's tune tells the story of many who set sail towards fishing traps (nets) and often find themselves returning in a 'bank of fog' unable to trust anything but the integrity of a compass. Lighthouses kept vigil and shone a hopeful red light of direction and hope for many fishermen who had perhaps travelled off

course. The 'tiny red light' of the lighthouse was the light of hope for fishermen and those waiting for the safe return of the fishermen. The 'tiny red light' put in the windows of houses of those that waited at home were personal lights of hopefulness for the safe return of loved ones out to sea.

Music and Hope

Many important cultural stories of Newfoundland are remembered through music and voice. This is a Newfoundland tradition, and these Newfoundland songs are musical diaries of the people. Three of the core-searchers of this study are singers and all are familiar with traditional chorus lines. One might conclude that Newfoundland's music and song serve as faithful connections to heritage, people, and traditions of the past as well as to the present. In their future, the core-searchers of this investigation will quite likely return to the musical words of Newfoundland finding hope as they reflect upon and remember their life as a maritimer.

Throughout the sharing of the stories found in Chapter Four the core-searchers emphasized the importance of remembering their heritage, their loved ones, and their religious faith. In the core-searchers' promises to never forget their 'Place Called Home,' they actively announced how they will remember, whether in a diary, in the ring of a grandmother, in the words of prayer, the decision to stay home or to take thoughts and memories with them on their travels. They hoped to remember and that they would find hope in their remembering.

As a means for revisiting and remembering home, the songs of Newfoundland hold rich potential for helping them to do this. In particular, the ballads tend to focus on the themes of the ocean, shores, relationships and faith. In essence they are songs of home. The lyrics of the ballads above highlight the hope in loving relationships, the hope in times of uncertainty and the hope in the identity of one's history.

How is it that such musical words that have endured the hardship on the land and sea, have survived the waves of change and continue to be sung? As vessels of tradition the songs are passed on from generation to generation providing a continuity for all no matter where the people may go. Hope is found in continuity (Buckley, 1977). Songs capture the language, culture and the history of Newfoundland. They are the musical biography of the people. Consider the theme in the following true excerpt and how it might be worked into a song:

> Myself, Joe and Dad used to fish together you see...and one day she was nasty...the weather was real poor and the seas were rough. Dad hooked the boat somehow unto a buoy and we were rockin' like mad in the swell...and then it seemed that Dad might be givin' up. I could see Joe watchin through the corner of his eye. Dad looked at the two of us and he said "Boys, ye might as well say yer prayers, I think we're goin' under". But...I wasn't ready to give up yet, ye see...and I made up me mind that it wasn't all over yet...I got one of the plastic jugs and started drainin' her cause the boat was full up with water...we got out of it somehow...we came on home that day....(Paul Edwards, age 48, a Journeyman Carpenter and former Fisherman. April 12, 2001- one day before his wedding).

Many musical families can be found in every little Newfoundland outport town. Many times the same songs are sung to the same beat and enthusiasm in each of these places. There is a hopefulness, amidst the pain, found in the songs of Newfoundland's journey. There is a hopefulness of survival, relationships and love for every Newfoundlander, no matter what the age. Hope as home, identity and connections is musically passed on from one generation to the next.

How does this Research Study Contribute to What is Known About Hope?

This investigation has tapped into an adolescent hopefulness which is personally precious and soulful. Previous research into the area of adolescents and hope has yielded results which specify the future oriented nature of adolescent hopefulness. While this research study found that adolescents desire and expect a bright and successful future for themselves and others, the heart of their hope beats much louder than their sense of a future goal-oriented hope. The heart of these

adolescent women's hope is joyful. This joy is shared freely in love. While these young women cannot abandon their goals for a successful future, to understand the core of each one is to understand the heart of her hope.

The three themes of hope that emerged from this research are close to each core-searcher's heart of hope. As long as the heart of hope is nourished, the goals of life will grow. Is it possible that a more nourished heart of hope could mean a stronger goal-oriented hope? Perhaps.

Hope is an integral part to the lives of the young women in this study. This hope is not just about anticipating a secure future. Rather, it is something that cannot be separated form the past, present or the future.

Adolescence is a time for forming one's own identity but not without some turbulence. The intimate struggle of personal growth and development amidst the eagerness and fear of decision-making and choices brings with it the inevitable yet curious phase of the dialectic nature of life. The dialectic lives itself out in adolescence as children leave behind toys and childlike games and inquisitively yearn to experiment with a sense of self, scared yet curious, courageous yet uncertain.

The dialectic turbulence which characterize adolescence is a significant experience in coming to understand one's self and the influence of being connected with others. While connections might be primarily with their peers, this study suggests that past and present loving relationships, other than with their peers, find a special place in the heart, hope and age of adolescence.

The young women in this study are holding on tightly to hope, trusting it and remembering how important it is in their lives. These adolescents need their hearts of hope. They need hope and they live hope.

A Final Look at the Research Findings

While hope might seem to be a mystery, it is something about which more can be known. As a dynamic process, hope might seem to be intangible, yet embedded in the blending of lived space, lived time and specifically in lived human relations, it is recognized and knowable (van Manen, 1990). Hope was found in the space between the ebb and flow of the young women's life dichotomies. As something learned from the past and nurtured in the present, their hope was instrumental in preparing them for a future. Relationally, hope was experienced in the pure love of another, transcending pain, time and the concrete nature of the human world.

As the core-searchers in this study moved forward, they had hope that life would not fail them or that they would not fail it. Their lives in a magical way rolled forward, sometimes taking them to calm seas or towards turbulent waves of uncertainty. Nonetheless, their hope took them forward.

CHAPTER SIX

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIELD OF COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY AND FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

My hope is that this research study will bring to light a deeper understanding of adolescent hopefulness, and hence contribute to the field of counselling psychology. The themes of this study underscore the importance of listening to adolescents' hearts of hope. In addition, they support existing evidence that adolescent hopefulness is grounded in future goals and expectations of a bright future for oneself and for others. Beyond this goal oriented perspective however, this study invites the reader to reach the 'heart and the soul of hope' of adolescents. In doing so the potential exists to enhance therapeutic relationships through the eyes of the adolescent.

This research study illuminates the relationship between hope and identity, hope and home and hope and love found in caring relationships. These relationships need to be considered within the framework of the therapeutic relationship. Understanding how adolescent hopefulness is grounded in their identity and in their sense of home, might foster a more meaningful and productive therapeutic experience.

This research, similar to previous hope research has attempted to unravel the mystery of hope. Adolescent hopefulness in this study speaks directly to the power of hope in their lives. Learning about adolescent hopefulness is instrumental to understanding each adolescent that dares to walk towards facing one's pain in the experience of psychotherapy.

Without question, future research into the experience of hope of adolescents is essential so as to enrich an understanding of adolescent hopefulness

for psychologists and society in general. With an enriched understanding of hope experience of various populations, including adolescents, the field of counselling psychology will become a practice that is 'hopeful' in nature.

One Attempt to Bridge the Gap

I will now return to relating the implications of hope as a tool in the field of counselling psychology. A gap exists between what is known about hope and how it is used in a therapeutic manner.

What I have learned about hope through the women of this research study has taken me beyond these women and has allowed me to reflect upon a case. In order to address how hope can be used in counselling adolescents, I am going to introduce a case study which I had actually written previous to this project. The case study is the story of an adult, not an adolescent; a male, not a female, chosen because it is a true story and a powerful story. This story has the potential to take the reader on a journey to the depths of darkness found within the hopelessness of this person's life experience. It also highlights the clinical importance of searching for new ways to find this person's lost hope. This case study takes the reader beyond the female adolescent focus of this study but keeps with the theme of hope as a therapeutic tool. Although the person of this case study is an adult male, he was once an adolescent male, and one might begin to wonder how his adulthood might have been different if his adolescent hope or hopelessness had been heard and more accurately understood.

Ultimately this section aims to move beyond counselling theory and hope theory towards a position of creating an awareness around the issues of hope resurrection, maintenance and facilitation in the counselling process. It is an example of how what is known about hope can be integrated into the counselling process; in short, how hope can be an intentional part of practice.

An Empty Bag of Tricks?

To some, counselling techniques can become a collection in a "bag of tricks" for practitioners. Techniques to establish empathy, rapport, active listening, reframing, story-telling , and collaborating are critical elements fundamental to this therapeutic alliance. Throughout the interactive therapeutic experience, a dedicated psychologist implements all of these techniques within the context of human compassion and caring and trusts that they will work. But what happens when they don't? What happens when empathy is not enough? What happens when a history of medication, treatments, therapy, hospitalization and family support are not enough? Where does the client turn? Does it mean that he or she is incurable or that the therapist is unsuccessful? Is the situation hopeless? Should the client give up or should the therapist quit?

WHEN HOPE IS MISSING...

"Without hope, both the future and the now can be colorless and dim. If you feel hopeless, then you need hope. It is that simple." (Angel Wisdom, November 9). Farran et al (1995), have argued that it is clinically easier to recognize the absence of hope than when it is present. They have further suggested that hope and hopelessness are two experiences that can represent opposite expectations and while seemingly separate, they are also creatively related to one another. Is it not possible then seemingly possible that a clearer understanding of hope may be found in exploring its darker side - the side of hopelessness? To answer this question I have chosen to present the case of Sam, a true story about a man who had lost hope.

"MY NAME IS SAM"

"I might as well lie down on the floor and die." he whimpered. The floor is cold, concrete, unforgiving and unkind. The room is his cage. Not many

dare to visit this place. Not many people can stand the shrill cries of madness, the empty stares of confusion and the endless, hollow corridors.

His whimper is so soft, so gentle, just as he is. But his pain is so large, so lonely. His pain is like a thief! Annie sits beside him on the small, neatly dressed bed. She wraps her arms around his frail, drained, almost lifeless-like body as he cries. She touches him with her love.

Her tenderness lingers with him for the rest of the night. He is so grateful. As he gathers the heavy, dark gray blanket around his thin body he catches a glimpse of the night sky through the tiny rectangular window in his room. The window is a prison window and he is held here as a prisoner of illness. He is acutely aware of his illness. Some illnesses steal the faculties, not his...Sam is perfectly aware of his pain, the illness, the "torture" and he doesn't need the locked, bolted doors of this institution to chain and bound him to this 'mental' place.

His thoughts roam and eventually take him back to his cell window. Looking through a window can mean a vast of things for Sam. It can be as wonderful as watching a television screen or as bleak as looking into a dark hole of blackness. But Sam, tonight, the night of the day of the visit from Annie, realizes the beauty of the sky that fills the space endlessly outside his window. This dark sky is actually filled with stars, and this gives him a feeling of comfort. Tonight he remembers the story of his life in a dream while still awake, staring into the promise of a sky set aglow by a zillion light bulbs. This is Sam's story and he is the narrator....

My name is Sam- I am a person, a man. A long time ago I was a happy, young boy. I ran, I jumped, I laughed and I played. I laced up the black laces of my worn brown ice skates with the rusty blades, and I skated for hours on the rink that my dad made for us in the backyard, in the "bog meadow." And my mom watched. I made snowballs, snowmen, and snowcastles. I rode wild horses, tended to my pets and yelled with ecstatic excitement when the electricity failed during a winter storm.

A long time ago I was a teenager. I was the best swimmer in the neighborhood, without having taken **ANY** lessons. I swam hard and strong as an athlete would. I loved to play guitar and everyone would say that I was the **BEST** - well, except for Keith Richards of The Stones. I wanted to be a rock n' roller, and I swore that I would play guitar forever. Then one day that determination began to silently slip away...and away... and so did I. I stopped playing my guitar. It's as though my heart died but my mind and body kept living. What's a body without a heart - nothing - but emptiness...

It's difficult to really recall when it all happened or what had happened, but it did. Loneliness, sadness, fear, and helplessness grew and grew until it could grow no more. I've heard it being referred to as depression or schizophrenia....I don't know...I remember my younger sister Annie asking, "But why does Sam have to suffer, why did he become so sick, why has his life been robbed from him?" Annie cares, I know that she does. A little bit of caring can go a long way...

Darker and darker becomes the cloud - that black cloud that eats you up and wipes out the sun and the music and the family and the world... Heavier and heavier becomes my sadness. Life has no meaning, no joy, there is just this nothingness cased in darkness. I have chased everyone away. I think that's what happens when one story of black darkness runs into another rude story of the same story until my voice no longer carries any sense of politeness or words of love that I am longing to share, only a monstrous anger! I am angry! I am hurt!

> Taking this medication is nothing other than wearing a mask that eventually peels itself off. There is no medication on God's earth that can fill the loneliness and fear that keeps tugging at my heart, strangling my soul. Where... where did everybody go?

Questions to Ask When Traditional Methods Fail.

Where is Sam's hope amidst his hopelessness? Can it be found? Can it be uncovered or resurrected? Is it still singing somewhere in his soul? Medications and hospitalizations have failed him. Sam - he is not a stranger, he could be my brother, your brother, your son or your father. He is a somebody. Sam is a man lost in the realm of mental darkness and endless torment. Is there any means of rescuing him? There must be.

But where in counselling psychology theory does it tell us where to turn when traditional tools of psychotherapy do not work? This question cannot afford to be left unanswered. This is where counselling theory might look to the theories of hope in order to find possible answers. While hope theory has recognized the powerful ingredient of hope as being essential to life, little has been said about how it is and can be practiced. Where counselling theory has missed addressing hope, hope theory has missed taking it into therapy. Isn't it somehow ironic that hope is recognizably established as instrumental to the therapeutic process and mental health improvement, yet counsellor education rarely consciously attends to it? Isn't it unfortunate that hope theory highlights the curative nature of hope yet fails to teach us how to use it? It is time for hope to be more visible in the practice of psychology.

Naming Hope in the Practice of Psychology

What would more focus on the issue of hope mean for the practice of psychology? What could that possibly mean for Sam? What could it mean for adolescents, for adults and the elderly? It seems possible that a specific focus on

hope could potentially create a deepened understanding of individual hope. Herein lies the potential to open the door of possibility of gathering a clearer and more meaningful understanding of the people who trust to share their life stories in a therapist-client relationship. To learn more about the heart of hope might just mean learning to find lost hope and learning to rescue it from the grasp of hopelessness.

But how could this elusive creature that soars in and out of lives and rescues and guides worlds of uncertainty be captured? Would it need to be unmasked in some quantitative fashion before it can be given the attention that it is needed? Once again Hope, you leave us with our questions.

Answers are, however, being discovered in the Hope-Focused Counselling Program developed and documented at the Hope Foundation of Alberta as part of an on-site counselling practice (Edey, Jevne & Westra, 1998). As a "system of processes and strategies which make hope the central theme of counselling." (Edey, Jevne & Westra, 1998, p. 10), Jevne (1998), has asserted that hope can be more than the outcome of an effective therapeutic relationship and if explored in an intentional manner, hope can benefit the established methods of counselling practice.

Pain of Hopelessness

"The individual who is without hope is in critical condition" (Carlson et al., 1990, p. 85). It seems that where there is no hope there is much pain.

SAM'S PAIN

> I have only one eye that can see well now. The other stopped seeing a long time ago. I beat at the pain and lost my vision at the same time...I guess. Perhaps that's better because with one eye I see less, and maybe there's a chance of feeling less...less of the sadness and loneliness.
>
> The rollercoaster ride of mental illness has drained me. The ungreased wheels of this ride are screeching to a halt and there is no more momentum. Up and down, in and out, angry and miserable, hatefulness and sadness. It's easy to hate yourself when you are dying from a mental illness. I do.

> I can smell the aroma of Rothmans cigarettes...once it was sweet smelling and delicious. Now...just the stink of yet another hassle...the hassle of lighting a smoke, smoking it with the hopes of some relief and thinking that I was grabbing unto, if not touching some relief in the few moments while it is burning. No...no hope is found there...no hope at all. Just time, endless and merciless. Time is everywhere and everything. Time alone, time lingering, time in darkness, time in pain, time to cry but never time to forget....No hope is here...it left a long time ago....didn't it?

Questions From A Hope-Focused Perspective

Would and could a hope-oriented approach reach into the pits of Sam's misery and resurrect a hope that once sang a tune while Sam played his guitar? If so, then it must be considered. There are many Sams with diverse stories of pain, misery, loss and deterioration. In this research study stories of uncertainty, sadness, loss as well as joy and love were told throughout an intentional investigation into hoping experience. The stories were grounded in relationships, identity and a place called home. What are the stories of Sam's hope? Where are the stories of Sam's hope? Would a specific and intentional focus on Sam's hope provide some answers? Is the practice of counselling psychology listening close enough to the possibilities of Hope? Hope has been acknowledged by many but is she really being heard?

The Researcher's Reflections on Hope and Wellness

I sincerely advocate that hope facilitates wellness. Perhaps one of the most important ingredients of wellness is that of hope. As psychologists-in-training or as seasoned therapists, it appears that an understanding of the human hoping process is fundamental to the development and direction of the therapeutic plans of wellness. As a therapist I am held accountable to gather all of the tools of my trade and commit myself to an on-going learning process. Listening carefully to the people that share themselves in therapy is none other than the perfect place to engage in this learning.

"I am so miserable," Sam murmured.

"Tell me more about it." the therapist replied.

"Well, my life is nothing, it never was, it's useless and **hopeless**...I might as well give up."

"Hopeless?"

"Yes. Hopeless," Sam replied.

The therapist leaned forward and with an inner sense of calmness, she then inquired, "Sam, what was the hope that brought you here today?"

With a puzzled look of confusion, he raised his tired head, frail faced and pale and said, "my **hope**?"...Continuing he whispered silently with the trickle of a tear sliding down his face ... "my hope is..."

If indeed hopelessness is the darker side of hopefulness, then we must wonder how the word itself, that is, hopelessness, was left behind when the client spoke the word hope. This is not the end of his battle, it is just the beginning perhaps, but a different language has been spoken and much power, if not influence lies in the spoken word.

Words are as large as mountains and they can hurt and they can heal. Perhaps a word called hope has the potential to invite a language of healing, stretching beyond hope theory and beyond counselling theory, and for that reason it deserves to be given its rightful place in the language of therapeutic relationships. As a hope researcher, a hopeful therapist-in-training and as a hopeful human being, I believe that it is time to Name Hope in the practice of psychology.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

There are some delimitations to this study. These findings are specific to a population that has been shaped and formed through a maritime way of life, nestled in a rural town which is grounded in Christian thought and Roman Catholicism. In this sense the research may be contextually and culturally limited for:

> We cannot consider the environment independent of the ways in which people construe their environment, nor can we consider persons' experiences of their environments without considering the ways in which those environments have influenced persons' experiences of them (Bandura, 1978, p.80).

This delimitation, however, is a reality for any research population, whether it be the rural town of Newfoundland, a large Edmontonian school area on the west side or Ireland's Belfast.

The core-researchers of this study were volunteers who were eager to engage in a study around hope and who were ready to talk plenty about the issue. Considering that the findings of this research study aim to deepen an understanding of adolescent hopefulness which can be positively utilized in counselling, how relevant might this study be for adolescent clients who enter therapy involuntarily? How do practitioners transfer the information of these findings into a therapy session with an adolescent who may be unwilling to participate? Or is this question even an important one?

The core-searchers of this study were all female. An investigation into the hope of healthy adolescent males was not part of this study. Limitations may be found in the fact that males were excluded or that the study did not consider a combination of healthy male and female adolescents. Furthermore, research of this nature might be considered.

Photography proved to be an exceptionally useful means for gathering rich qualitative data in this study. However, a limitation regarding the use of photography is found in its cost. The cost of disposable cameras and film development is a limitation to consider. Furthermore, travelling to a rural area, whether in Newfoundland or elsewhere may also incur more costs, in terms of transportation, accommodations and the frequency of visits. These are some points to consider.

Recommendations For Future Research

As I bring this research study to an end, I am left with some recommendations that need to be considered in future qualitative research endeavours about hope:

1) My first recommendation is that a researcher who engages in a qualitative study should transcribe their tape-recorded interviews. I feel that any qualitative researcher could greatly benefit from transcribing one's own data, especially when delving into an elusive mystery/construct such as hope. In my doing so, I came to know the core-searchers in a more meaningful way that would not have been possible if I had not engaged in the transcribing. The silences, sniffles, and swallowing that I heard a second and third time are those living human touches that enrich the data beyond compare. By transcribing their tape-recorded voices, I lived with the data in a deeper way than what would have happened if I had only listened once to their words. To transcribe one's data is to feel the data versus just listening to its words.

2) My second recommendation is that any researcher wishing to examine hope must first take the time to learn about his or her own hope. It is important to learn about it deeply and authentically, taking the time to let hope 'teach you about you'. In preparation for a research project in the area of hope, researchers are encouraged

to learn the academic history of hope, its models and definitions and to highlight biases and presuppositions. This is especially helpful and applicable. The invitation in Graduate Studies (EDPSY 632) to engage in an optional assignment marked the genuine beginning of my investigation.

3) In this research study the findings revealed a relationship between Hope and Home. This relationship proved to be a powerful one. Further research into this relationship is warranted.

4) If hope needs to 'grow up' often on the heels of difficult life experiences, does this mean that there are no born hopers or that without difficulty hope can never be learned or expanded? Can hope not be born out of only joyful experiences? Although some answers to these questions are acknowledged, it seems that learning more about what helps hope grow up is important.

5) Are some people better at hoping than others. Further research is needed to explore how and why this might be the case.

6) The findings of this research study speak to an important relationship between hope and identity. Further research in this area warrants consideration.

7) Implementing hope into school curriculum has begun and appears to be a useful mode of introducing and teaching young people about hope - how to recognize it, search for and find it. A research project to examine such tools for generating hopefulness is critical.

8) Furthermore, additions to the training curriculum within the field of counseling psychology are recommended. Students of counselling psychology could benefit from learning extensively about hope in the training component of psychology so that it can be utilized as a therapeutic tool. Qualitative research needs to be done to determine how this can best be accomplished.

CHAPTER SEVEN

"On The Way"

On this simple page of white dance the gleeful lights of 'My Hope-Tree.' I planted you, my 'Hope-Tree' in a huge white five gallon bucket right beside my 'dissertation desk' at the beginning of my project. You have stood there strongly without bend or buckle. You have listened to my frustrations, dilemmas, victories, insights, insecurities, doubts and more doubts, and now... here you are with me in this final stage. You have given freely tiny twigs from your branches which marked the many pages of my readings. And most of all, in the artfulness of your earthly nature, and in the tiny lights of peacefulness, you have given freely of your hope. In you, 'My Hope-Tree' I have found the burning perseverance to stand above the fearfulness that held me captive as I began this project and to find a silent place of solitude in your hope-filled corner of my room. Thank-you. (Personal Reflection, May 10, 2001).

This chapter is 'My Story.' In an openness and vulnerability which I have learned from the women of the research study, I will now share with you what I know to be my newly experienced personal liberation which is grounded in this study of hope. This research has changed me in ways that I am aware and perhaps in other ways that I have not yet met. This journey towards understanding hope has also been a journey towards understanding myself. A sigh of relief confirms the gratefulness of my soul.

MY TEACHERS

This chapter will trace my experiences of learning and change throughout this research project. I will begin with the things that the 'Daughters of Newfoundland' - my teachers, have taught me throughout my time with them. Through a maturity, integrity, loyalty and insightfulness which I could never have imaged, I learned about the relationship between Hope and Home.

This particular relationship, I outwardly admit, was never one that I had often considered in my lifetime. I am always happy to return to the love of my family and this is what I have learned to call home from a young age...but home as being the tiny town where I was born and raised had never occurred to me. I began to wonder why and found some answers in a book Female Adolescent Development by Max Sugar (1993). Sugar points out that the experience of loss or tragedy at a young age can potentially disconnect an adolescent female from her world. In my case, the experience of tragedy was the prolonged, painful death of my father at age fifty-three. I was nine and my little sister was eight.

> "Stella - Laura", my older sister's husband said, "come on - get up...hurry...get up and say good-bye to your father." I got out of my top bunk bed and Laura and I walked down the hall towards mom and dad's bedroom. I saw the green oxygen tank as I had many times before. I reached down to him, kissed his lips and said "I LOVE YOU DAD." I was frightened. I walked away and stood in the hall outside his crowded bedroom, angry because his sister whom I had never liked got the chance to sit beside him on the bed. I watched him die that morning. (Memory, May 10, 2001).

Sugar's (1993) assertions would suggest that given the specific loss in my life at this age, I would have naturally hesitated to make human connections in a natural, perhaps trusting way. To this I do agree. In my years as an adolescent my connections were primarily to my family,

my pets, several nuns who taught me at school and a priest who became a special friend forever. Friendships with peers existed but never in any depth. I moved on from my hometown at age seventeen and basically didn't even care to look back or re-connect with highschool classmates. This research study has disclosed sad losses for me that I had not been aware of before such as never having a lifelong primary grade friend or an intrinsic joy about high school graduation or lasting meaningful friendships from my growing up years in my hometown.

> Shamefully I feel envious of the young women and their bond with HOME. In a telephone conversation with Gentle Thunder I said, "You know...I have been thinking a lot about the fact that you are so closely connected to your home. I can't really remember feeling that way. It makes me feel jealous you know? Gentle Thunder laughed and said "But you're from here too aren't you? Her response was kind and she was right. (Personal Reflection/Telephone Check-In - June 19, 2000).

What this research has most importantly taught me is that finding hope in 'A Place Called Home' (as the core-researchers called it) is never too late. I realized this when I sat in the old dining room which is now a TV room in our house that my Dad built, and I could feel that I was HOME. My eyes filled with tears and my heart with HOPE. My ears couldn't hear, except for the sound of peacefulness and bliss. "In this house I have found HOME - in this house I have found HOPE and in this house I have found pieces of my authentic self" (May 9, 2000).

> "As I sit here on this torn couch in Dad's house I can smell the musty scent of a house not lived in. My thoughts take me back to memories that seem to play themselves like a film projector on the paneling walls in front of me. I am feeling overwhelmed yet my heart is filled with joy. Peace has snuggled around me - God is here and Dad is here. I am not alone. The wind howls beautifully throughout the downstairs level singing in the most unusual musical note. Years ago, I taught myself to howl like the wind. I love the sound of wind. I grew up here - in this house in this tiny fishing own. Dad died here, but he also lived here. As I sit in the silence of HOME, peace continues to reach out and touch me. (Personal Reflection, May 9, 2000).

When Feelings of Fear Find Places of Comfort

The experience of this research has magically re-written parts of me. Today I am more honest. I spend less time worrying about loved ones and more time touching them with my love. The trusting nature of the core-searchers has intrinsically touched me instilling in me the commitment to remain faithful to authenticity despite the ridiculous temptations that life intrudes upon the honesty of the genuine.

I spend even more time in nature than before. Nature has always been my 'personal garden'. I have always appreciated the trees, rocks, ocean, snow, hills, sand, tree stumps, and the animals of the world. Many times I have chatted with wild rabbits and kissed the beautiful faces of kittens and horses. Fresh roses and dried roses have been my primary symbols of hope. So much beauty is found freely in the rawness of the earth, especially after a snowfall or rainfall when the world seems untouched and untainted. I feel to bypass the beauty of a cool fall morning is to cheat your soul of smiles and a personal sunshine. This past year has taught me how to be more one with the world, the earth, love, and my person.

I have found a stronger sense of self due to those that have believed in me as I have embarked upon this research journey. Terry, my husband has never failed to congratulate me on a day's work or on one paragraph. His love and support have often made the difference in my turning on the computer for a day's work.

Joe, my brother, in his courageous battle against his illness, has once again decided to return to a hospital with the hope of healing. His example of courage against fear has been instrumental to how I handle my own fears. I walked him down the corridor towards his semi-private room just a few weeks ago during a visit to St. John's for our oldest brother's wedding (May, 2000). I feel proud that Joe trusts me. I trust him even more. "Joe, you are so special to me."

A very good friend of mine has believed in me for a long time. Her belief in me has always made a difference in my life. She is someone that I admire. She is an individual, a "fiercely independent " woman, and a kind hearted human being. I call her Lotty Lou. When I started this project I knew that I could do it when she told me that she thought that I could do it as long as I try my best. She has become one of my best friends and she is my baby sister Laura.

Dr. Ronna Jevne, my supervisor has calmed me so that I could release my personal style into the writing of this project. She has believed in me and my artful

way of interpreting the world. For that I am genuinely appreciative. Without the belief of others I wonder if I would not have stayed mentally there on the bottom step of the stair case of our home, feeling almost paralyzed by fear, while wondering:

> Can I do it? Can I write well enough? Am I smart enough for this project? Will I be able to do what so many others have done so well? Should I close the book on the dissertations of other people that so clearly intimidate me? Should I mention to anyone that other writers scare me? Why can't I think clearly? Will I ever be able to start this? Will the VERY weird dreams about this project EVER stop?!! (Memory, August 23, 2001)

Dr. Jeanette Boman has shared her incredible insights with me as well as her time and thoughtful suggestions. Through her soft voice and warm written words I have found much hope and encouragement. Often her kind messages have marked the personal energy of this research journey.

Dr. Marianne Doherty-Poirer has never been without an encouraging smile or helpful feedback, all of which have been critical as I have attempted to race against my fears while seeking a place of calm and confidence which would lead me to the completion of my meaningful work.

Without the belief of others in me and my trust in them I wonder if I would still be clinging to the notion of "how to do a phenomenological study" no matter how many times I was told that that there is no one precise way.

> While progressing through the dissertation, at perhaps chapter Four, I was still not convinced that I was doing OK. I said to my supervisor, "Ronna, sometimes I wonder if I am doing this right", and rather than rescue me she said, "Stella, (as she had so many times before), you need to remember that there's no right way of doing a phenomenological study" (email correspondence, April, 2001).

After a year of diligence, I now believe her. It served me well to trust in the artillery of the experts in my life. As I reflect upon the core-searchers' stories of relational significance I smile in knowing that I understand this connection and I believe in it. I too have been blessed by the love, support and belief of others and for that I am extremely grateful.

MY PERSONAL FEELINGS ABOUT THE RESEARCH

For a person who initially had no interest in becoming a researcher, I wish to express proudly and sincerely that this research study has been a wonderful experience for me. As a woman I was reminded of adolescence and returned to that world in a special way. As a researcher I learned to hold the precious moments of conversation in safety and deliver them the most skillful way I knew how. And as a therapist, I vow to never engage in a therapeutic relationship unless I begin each session with words and actions of hope.

Although this research is only one of the contributions to the hope literature, it aims to inform a deeper understanding of the mystery of hope, never with an intention to capture hope but only to understand hope better. I am hopeful that this research will reach into the realms of hope work and psychology and give readers essential reminders about the value of hope. I also hope that it motivates other researchers to qualitatively investigate this critical phenomena.

Heidegger (1962 cited in Colazzi, 1970, p. 70) gives us something important to consider when he asserts that as researchers it may be important to understand that "the structure of any Daesin (that is, a person as ontologically human) is such that it never "arrives" but is always only "on the way" then research, as a structural component of Daesein likewise can remain only on the way". This research, I hope, is on the way to deepening an understanding of the dynamics of hope and adolescents.

WHERE ARE THE CORE-SEARCHERS TODAY?

I'd like to inform the reader of how life has transpired for the five young women of this research study since our research conversations. Firstly, I'd like to relate that each young woman has expressed a pleasure in having participated in the study. In on-going telephone conversations, enthusiasm regarding the findings has been expressed in comments such as "That's so cool that my story meant all of that stuff..." , as well as a distinctive pride in one's chosen name such as when Blue Eyes Of Fire expressed the following: "Oh yeah Stella...ah...I like that name Stella - I like Fire! That's something I really like." (August, 2001).

Two of the core-searchers (Lonely and Invisible), have since successfully completed the first year of general studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Two other core-searchers (Gentle Thunder and Angel), are near completion of the final grade of high school and are quite excited about the Prom and academic plans for the following year. One core-searcher (Fire) is expecting her first child and also preparing for Prom. I trust in their futures and I believe in all of them.

On April 10, I received an email from the School Principal enthusiastically expressing that the district school board has approved to build a NEW school in this community. It seems to me that when a group of young women share a hope in continuity and love, miracles can actually happen.

In addition, the province of Newfoundland has potentially found hope for a brighter future. This future is not found, however, in the fishery, but in an oil well that has been discovered in the province. Already local men in a town near the drill rig have found employment. This research story tells that there is abundant hope found in a people who never give up - 'no matter what!' A province traditionally described as a "HAVE NOT" just might see the day when it takes on the new

name of a "MUST HAVE!"(Words borrowed from The National News (May, 2001), as stated by an eager Newfoundlander who appeared hopeful for the future).

Newfoundland is 'on the way' towards a hopeful future, this research study is 'on the way' towards contributing an understanding of the hope phenomena, the core-searchers are 'on the way' towards the next step of their lives, and I am 'on the way' towards becoming the authentic person I wish to be. Hope accompanies all of us as we move forward 'on the way' towards the future.

REMEMBERING TO SHARE HOPE

The final piece of this dissertation is about remembering to share one's hope. It ends with my personal story of sharing my hope with a very special little person.

Dear Dad:

> Twenty years have passed since I last saw you. I have missed you so much. We have all missed you. I am always glad to see your face and feel the touch of your hand on my shoulder in my dreams. I have kept your sweater for all of this time. I have worn it only occasionally but I have held it frequently. I am amazed that it fit you, considering that today it actually fits me. I have never washed it. Other than me, **YOU** were the last person to wear it. Now the time has come to pass it on. I pass it on in love and hopefulness. (Letter to my Dad, May 10, 2001)

(My older brother and very good friend John, holding his beautiful son Julian)

Dear 'Little' Julian:

> In the purity of your soul and in the joy of your birth, I am honored to give to you my Dad's precious sweater. I give to you what your grandfather, Mr. Julian Edwards gave to me a long time ago. Please always wear it with love, pride and hope. May God Bless You Always.

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APPENDIX 1

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

University of Alberta
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational Psychology

Project Title: What is the Experience of Hope for Female Adolescents of Rural Newfoundland?

Investigator: Stella Edwards

Supervisor: Dr. Ronna Jevne

Dear Students:

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about hope and adolescents. The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of female adolescents and their hope. I will be doing several interviews with you about your experiences of hope. These interviews will be audiotaped and then written unto paper. Eventually the tapes will be erased.

My name is Stella Edwards and I am a graduate student (Ph.D.) of the University of Alberta at Edmonton, Alberta. As part of this study I will be giving you each a 24 exposure disposable camera. I will then ask you to take pictures of 'your hope', capturing symbols of your hope. There are no right and wrong pictures of hope. The important thing is to take pictures of what hope means for you. During our interviews we will talk about your pictures of hope.

I will reproduce photographs and your explanations or part of your explanations when necessary. The research findings may be published and the results will be made available to you, at your request. I would be happy to share the results with you.

This study has been approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Educational Psychology, at the University of Alberta. Permission to participate will also be obtained from your parents. The study has no bearing on your school grades and your participation is completely voluntary. Your names and the school's name will be disguised so that it is not recognizable. You may withdraw from the study or decide to remove any of your photographs from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

If you would like to talk to me about the project, please feel free to call me collect at (801) 359-2886, or email me at stellaedwards@yahoo.com. Thank you for your help in this project.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT _____, hereby agree to be part of the research project about female adolescents and hope.

I understand that my name will be kept private as well as the name of my school. I also understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any questions and to take back any photo that I do not want to be part of this study.

I give my permission to take photographs about my hope and to be interviewed about the photographs as part of this project.

_____ _____

Participant/Student Researcher

_____

Date

APPENDIX 2

PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM

University of Alberta
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational Psychology

Project Title: What it the Experience of Hope for Female Adolescents of Rural Newfoundland?

Investigator: Stella Edwards

Supervisor: Dr. Ronna Jevne

Dear Parents:

I would like to include students (your children), from Holy Name of Mary High School in a research study on hope and adolescents. The purpose of this research study is to increase an understanding of hope for female adolescents. All information for the study will be gathered by using the photographs taken by students during the Hope Project and their explanations of the photographs. My name is Stella Edwards and I am a Graduate student (Ph. D. of Counselling Psychology) at the University of Alberta. The information gained from this project may form the basis for greater understanding of the concept of hope and the role of hope in the lives of adolescents.

For the purpose of this study I will reproduce photographs and accompanying explanations, or part of the explanations as seen necessary. The research findings may be published and the results will be made available to you, at your request.

This study has been approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Educational, University of Alberta. The study has no bearing on students' classroom performance and participation is completely voluntary. The students' names and responses will be kept confidential by using pseudo names and removing items that could possibly be traced back to them. Confidentiality will also be maintained by my dissertation supervisor who is also involved in the study. The students that decide to participate will be able to withdraw from the study or remove any of their photographs from the study at any time without negative consequences.

If you would like more information about the project, please call Stella Edwards collect at (801) 359-2886, or email at stellaedwards@yahoo.com
Thank you for your help in this project.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT _____
has been given parental permission to participate in this research project. I give my permission to allow my daughter to participate in this study.

_____ _____
Parent's Signature Researcher

_____
Date

APPENDIX 3

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

University of Alberta
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Department of Educational Psychology

Project Title: What is the Experience of Hope for Female Adolescents of Rural Newfoundland?

Investigator: Stella Edwards

Supervisor: Dr. Ronna Jevne

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, _____, hereby agree to an oath of confidentiality abiding by outlined ethical guidelines regarding my participation in this research study. I shall not disclose the identities of the participants of this research study.

I also agree to grant permission for all necessary meetings, interactions and/or interviews to occur on the school premises.

_____ _____

School Principal Researcher

_____

Date